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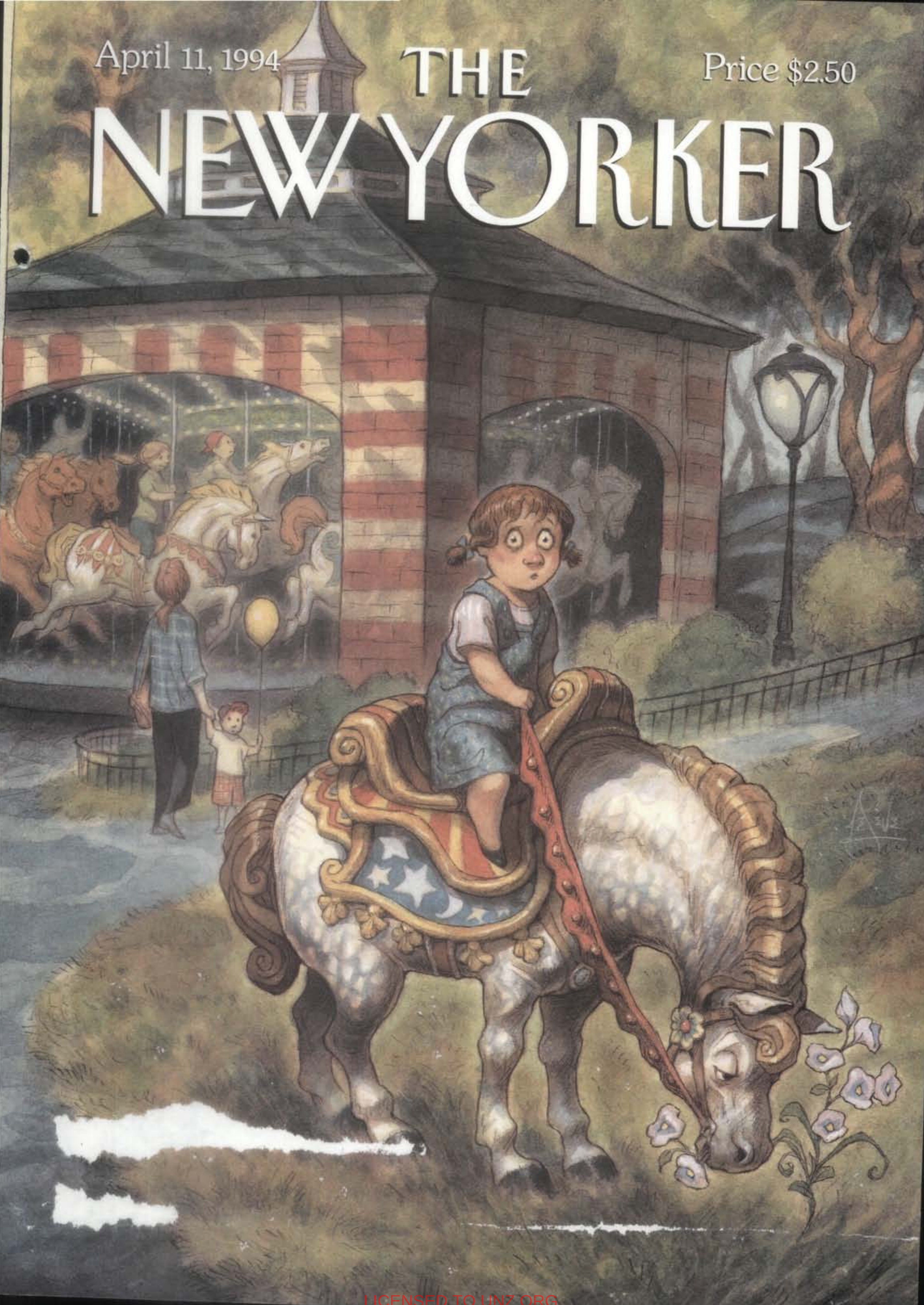

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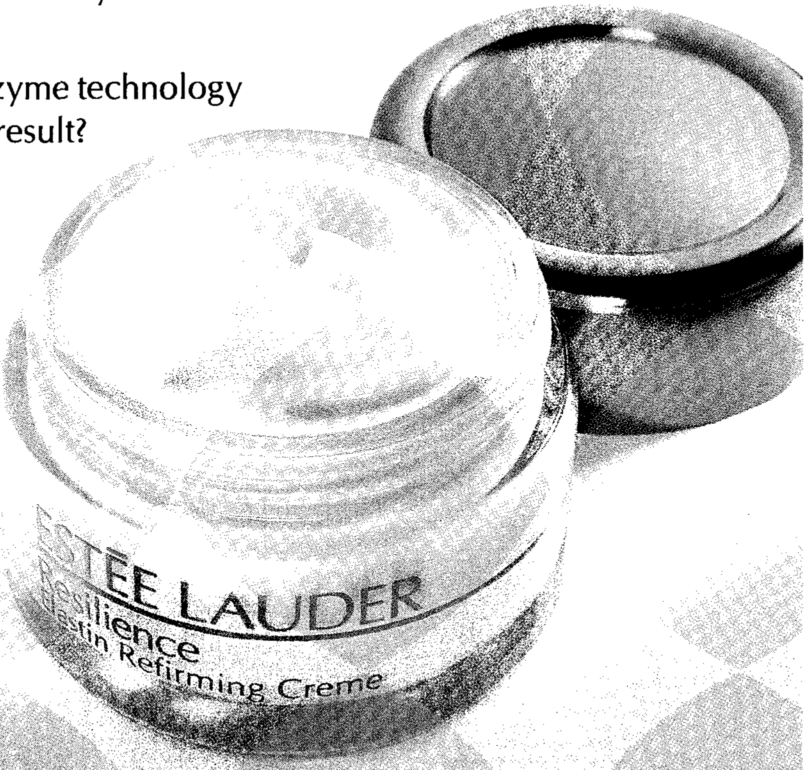

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APRIL 11, 1994

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THE NEW YORKER (ISSN 0028-792X), published weekly (except for two combined issues: the last week of December and the first week of January, and the last two weeks of August) by The New Yorker Magazine, Inc., 20 W. 43rd St., N.Y., N.Y. 10036. Vol. LXX, No. 8, April 11, 1994. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. Authorized as second-class mail by the Post Office Department, Ottawa, Canada, and for payment of postage in cash. Canadian Publication Mail Sales Product Agreement No.190969. Canadian goods-and-services-tax registration number R123242885. Registered as a newspaper at the British Post Office. Subscription rates: In U.S. and possessions, one year, $32.00; two years, $52.00. In Canada, one year, $65.27 (includes G.S.T.). Other foreign, one year, $76.00, payable in advance.

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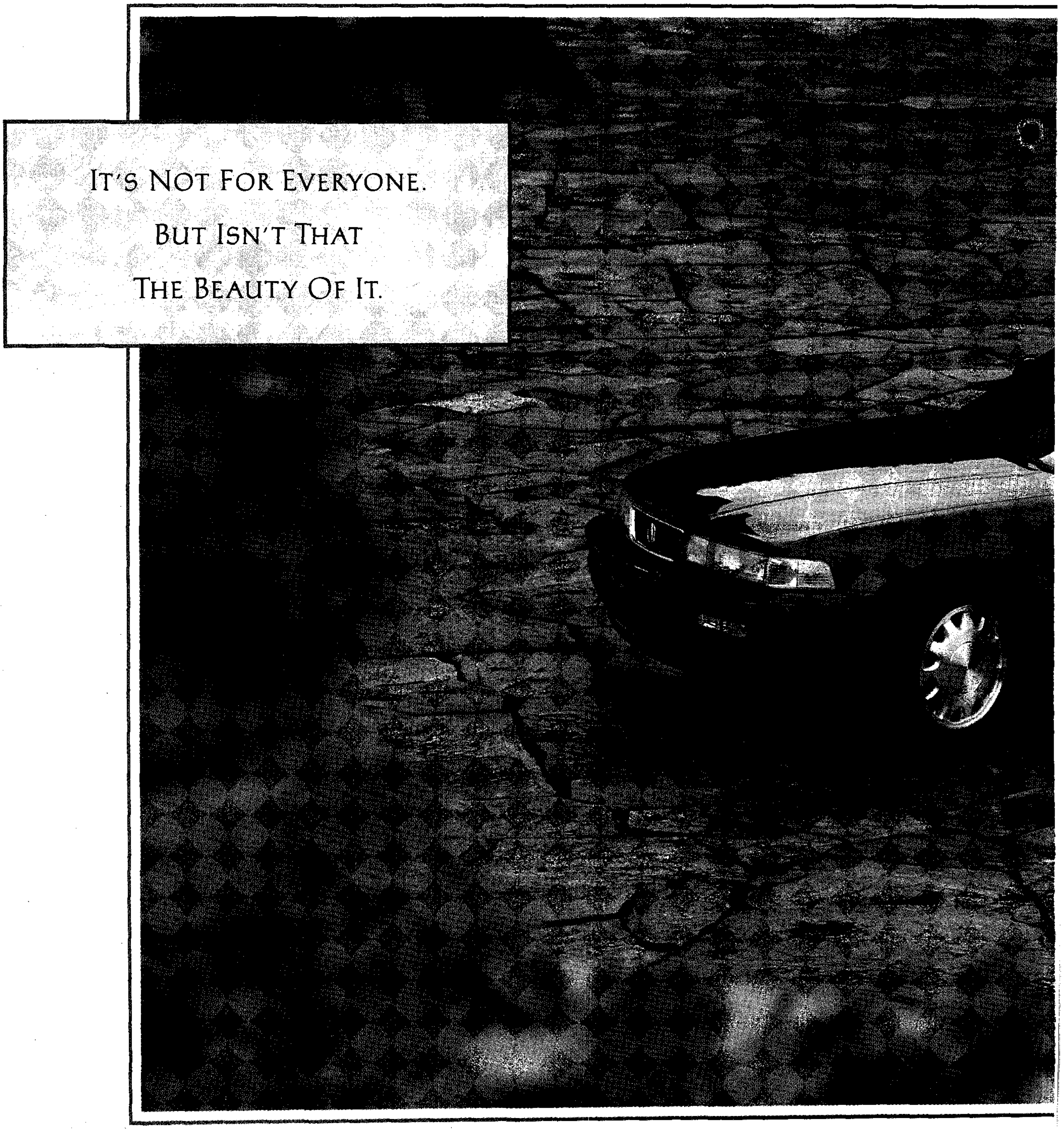

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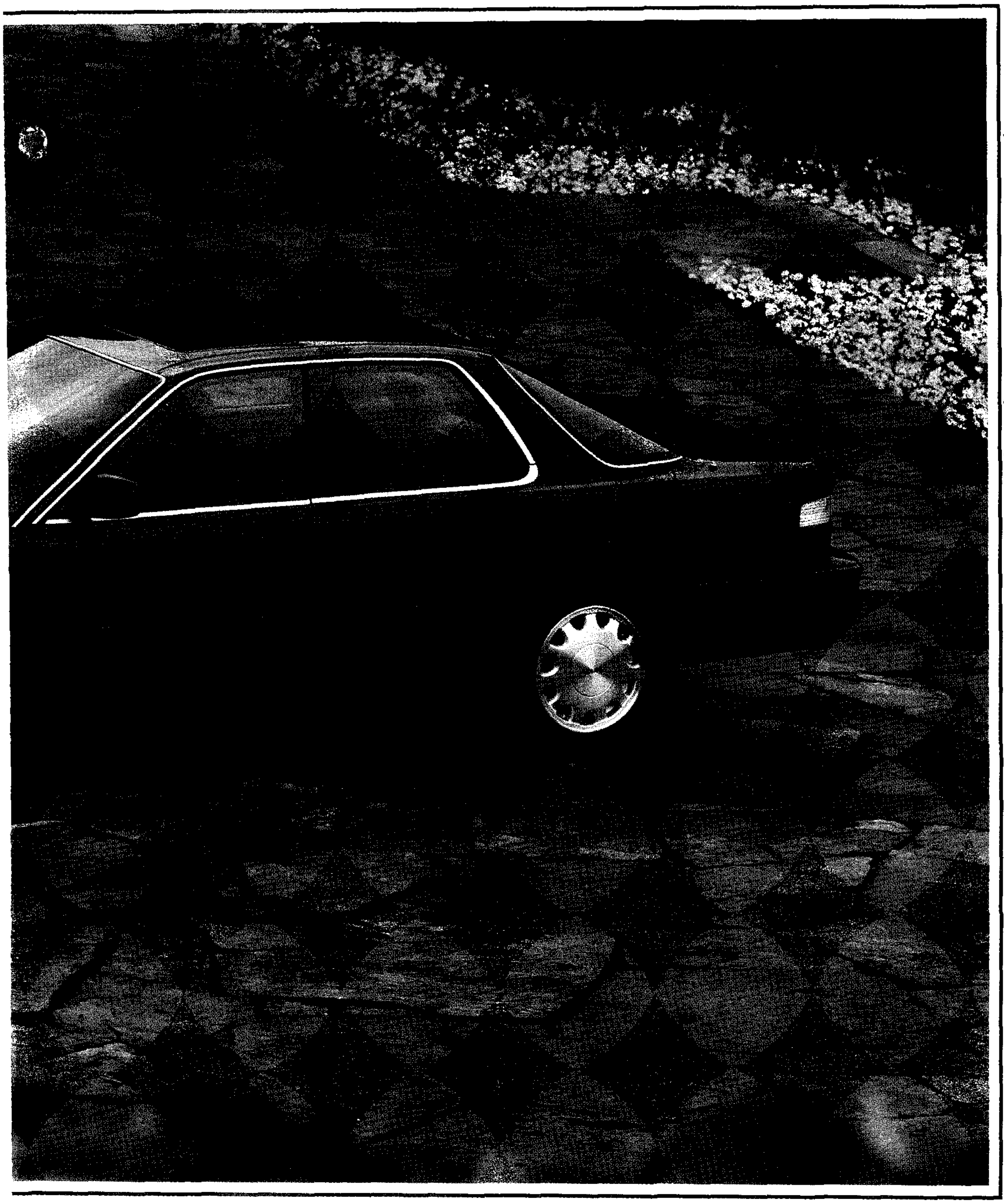

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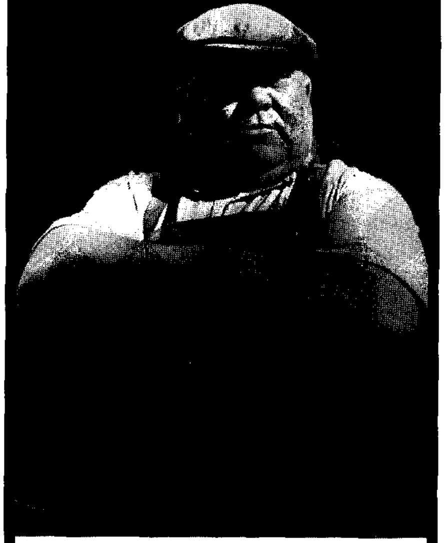

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COMMENT

SMOKE OUT

It has been more than twenty years since Congress took a significant step against the tobacco industry. While the antismoking movement has concentrated on the easy job of controlling where people can smoke, the task of controlling the cigarette-makers has proved more difficult. Today, the tobacco market is unfettered. Sales to minors continue, and tobacco manufacturing is largely unsupervised. The makers of breakfast cereals face a higher regulatory standard than the producers of cigarettes.

Last month, however, Dr. David A. Kessler, the commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration, told Congress he believes that his agency has the power to regulate cigarettes as if they were drugs. Kessler's announcement was couched in the most careful and conciliatory language. What he wanted, he said in his testimony, was legislative "guidance" on how to proceed. But his manner should not obscure the significance of what he has done, which is nothing less than to force the most serious examination of the tobacco industry since the early nineteen-sixties, when the Surgeon General asked for warnings on cigarette packages. Properly regulate cigarettes, Kessler essentially told Congress, or I'll ban them.

This is not an idle threat. Of all the federal regulatory agencies, the F.D.A. is arguably the most independent and the most powerful, with a clear legislative mandate and a long history of being granted wide discretion by the courts to protect the public health. More to the point, in Kessler, a Bush-era appointee, the agency has a commissioner whose desire to enforce public-health laws borders on zealotry—a man who was willing to stake his reputation three years ago on something as seemingly trivial as the use of the word "fresh" on the labels of reconstituted spaghetti sauce. In the food-and-drug industry, Kessler is known—entirely without irony—as Eliot Knessler.

What Kessler's F.D.A. has done is to resolve what has always been the thorniest dilemma of cigarette regulation;

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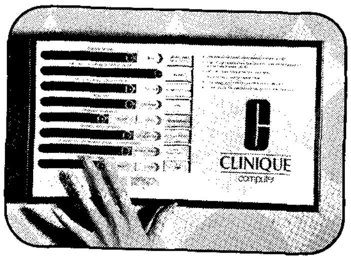
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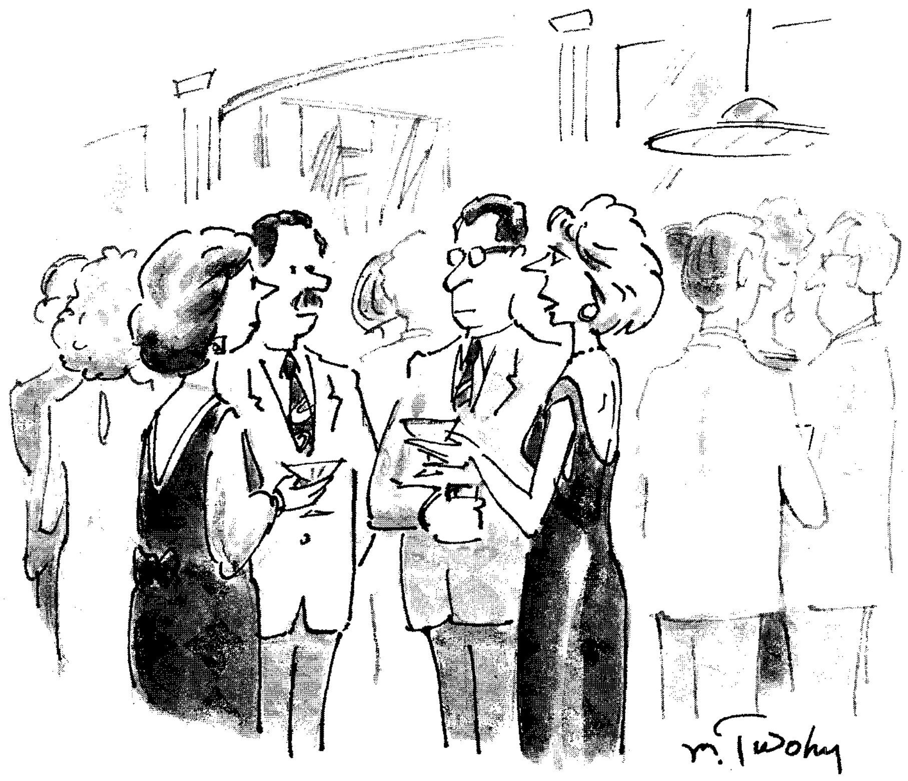

"We tried like hell to get Streisand tickets, but we ended up renting 'Yentl.' "

• •

namely, that no one knew who was supposed to do the regulating. It is a problem of language and bureaucracy worthy of Gogol. For regulatory purposes, for instance, the fact that cigarettes kill hundreds of thousands of people every year is irrelevant. There is nothing in the charter of the F.D.A.—or of any regulatory agency—that gives it automatic control over a product just because it is harmful. Nor does it matter that cigarettes are addictive. That's not a standard under the law, either. The F.D.A. statute says clearly that the agency can regulate as a drug only something that meets one of two narrow criteria: the product must be "intended" by its manufacturer either to affect the "structure or any function of the body" or to be used in the "mitigation, treatment, or prevention" of disease.

The key word here is "intended." Clearly, cigarettes alter body function. But, as the courts have ruled repeatedly, the fact that a company makes a product that acts like a drug isn't adequate proof that it intends its product to be used that way. Once, several years ago, the F.D.A. tried to have megadose Vitamin A and D pills classified as drugs, because consumers were using them to treat various ailments. But the Second Circuit court ruled that because people also used the vitamin pills for a nondrug purpose—to fill a nutritional deficiency in their diet—it was impossible for the agency to make any inference about what use their manufacturer intended for them.

This is why alcohol isn't a drug under the law. After all, don't many people drink for purely social reasons? Couldn't that be what Budweiser intends? In the half century since Congress passed the Food and Drug Act, the same argument has also served as the safe haven for the tobacco industry. Cigarettes, the industry has always argued, are intended to be used for pleasure; the fact that some smokers use them for another purpose—namely, to satisfy an addiction—is no reflection on the industry's motives. As arguments go, this bears an unsettling resemblance to the credo of the gun lobby: cigarettes don't kill people, people do.

The significance of Kessler's announcement is that the F.D.A. now believes, for the first time, that it can prove intent. According to Kessler, tobacco-industry patent filings, and internal documents uncovered during some of the product-liability litigation of the past several years, the industry has developed sophisticated technologies to manipulate the amount and intensity of nicotine in a cigarette. Then, last week, the F.D.A. also revealed that it had uncovered a study conducted by Philip Morris showing that it clearly knew how addictive nicotine is. These facts give Kessler clear evidence of intent: Why else would the industry alter nicotine levels except as a way of encouraging addiction? It's not as if adding nicotine to cigarettes made them taste better. On the contrary, it adds a harsh and bitter flavor, which the industry has had to go to a lot of trouble to cover up.

Of course, Kessler doesn't actually want to declare cigarettes drugs. If he did that, he would have to ban them, because there is no way that cigarettes can meet the required standards of safety for drugs. And to ban cigarettes would be to cause social and economic havoc, sending millions of Americans into withdrawal and creating an instant realm of opportunity for organized crime. On the other hand, the law is the law. The F.D.A. is an agency run by doctors, and doctors will not prescribe a drug that kills. What Kessler is telling Congress is that unless it takes steps of its own he may have no choice but to act.

What will satisfy the F.D.A.? One idea, which has already been floated in Congress, is to allow the agency to regulate cigarette tobacco as a kind of half drug, giving the F.D.A. the same degree of control over the manufacturing and marketing of cigarettes that it has over the handling of prescription drugs but still keeping tobacco legal. Such a half-drug status could give the F.D.A. clear authority to begin monitoring the sale of cigarettes to minors, to regulate all forms of cigarette marketing, and, ultimately, to set regulations for the limitation, and then the elimination, of tar and nicotine in cigarettes. No one should be under any illusions that it will be easy to accomplish. The tobacco industry retains powerful friends in Congress, and there are still strong prejudices against granting more power to federal regulators. There comes a point, however, when protecting the health of some thirty-five million Americans addicted to cigarettes has to take precedence over the economic interests of the tobacco industry. David Kessler has given Congress the opportunity to reverse a generation of public-health negligence. ♦

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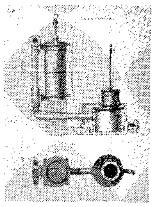

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IN THE MAIL

THE WAR OF ALL AGAINST ALL

In his discussion of sex and violence (A Critic at Large, March 14th), Louis Menand cogently explores these unfortunately linked cultural preoccupations. I believe he goes slightly off the track, however, in concluding—with respect to the rise of "identity" politics—that groups are "essentially imaginary" and souls "can be saved, or lost, only one at a time." As Mr. Menand rightly notes, John Wayne Bobbitt's treatment of his wife most likely reflected ideas he had about women as a class. But when the glibly maligned "victim feminists" treat women as an oppressed class they do so precisely in order to highlight how imagined conceptions of women help produce and sustain very real harm to individual females. When the misconceptions about people in devalued categories widely distort "intergroup" relations—male-female, white-black, straight-gay—something more than individual soul saving is needed to redirect people's thinking and behavior.

EDWIN M. SCHUR
New York City

Mr. Menand's article sheds light on the troubling relationship between personal responsibility and political correctness. By promoting the view of ourselves as a culture of victims entitled to protection and compensation for our victimization, we are empowering the system to dictate our behavior. We have forgotten that America was founded to be a haven from those people who would tell us the "right" way to speak and act and live. If you cherish the *idea* of living in a country protecting free speech, then you must accept the burden of hearing a lot of things disagreeable to your ears. If you can't accept that burden, then you should go live in a country that permits only the kind of speech you wish to hear. The hippie Fascism of political correctness, the coercive moral Fascism of the "right-to-life" movement, the willingness to hold the school system and the television set responsible for the moral development of our children are all part of a dangerous entropy of the American mission. The concept of personal responsibility must become fashionable if we are to resist this disintegration.

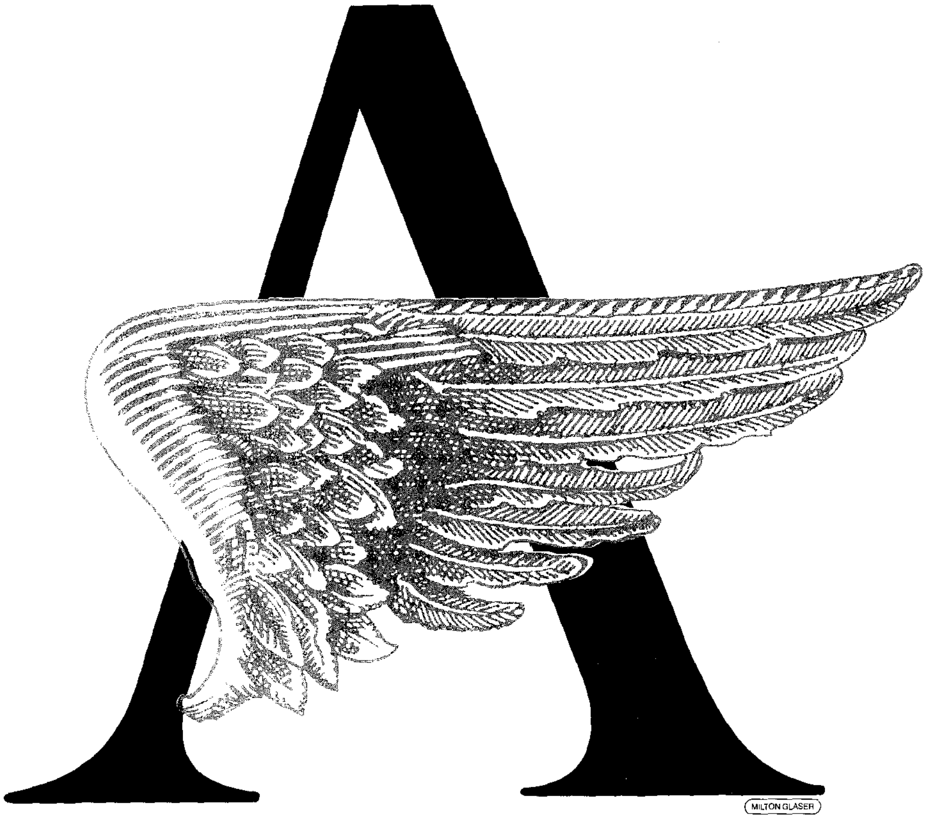
ANDREW M. ELMORE
New York City

RALPH ELLISON

David Remnick's profile of Ralph Ellison ("Visible Man," March 14th) spotlighted yet another chapter in the continuing, nearly century-long debate between African-American integrationists and separatists. I believe that today most knowledgeable African-Americans would prefer to take what they need from both camps and leave the rest; neither side is completely justified or right. I'm not convinced that if the integrationists succeeded in regaining the ascendancy in the arts and in the academy they would yield the floor occasionally to the cultural nationalists or any other group. It would be only a matter of time before someone else would proclaim a "New Negro" literary movement to kick off the traces—if only from sheer boredom.

GABRIELLE DANIELS
Mill Valley, Calif.

It stirs the juices to hear Ellison speak, at eighty, with such slow, defiant satisfaction about his novel-in-progress and the country's complexity-in-progress. But Mr. Remnick stops too short when he writes that Ellison's works "are the urtexts for a loose coalition of black



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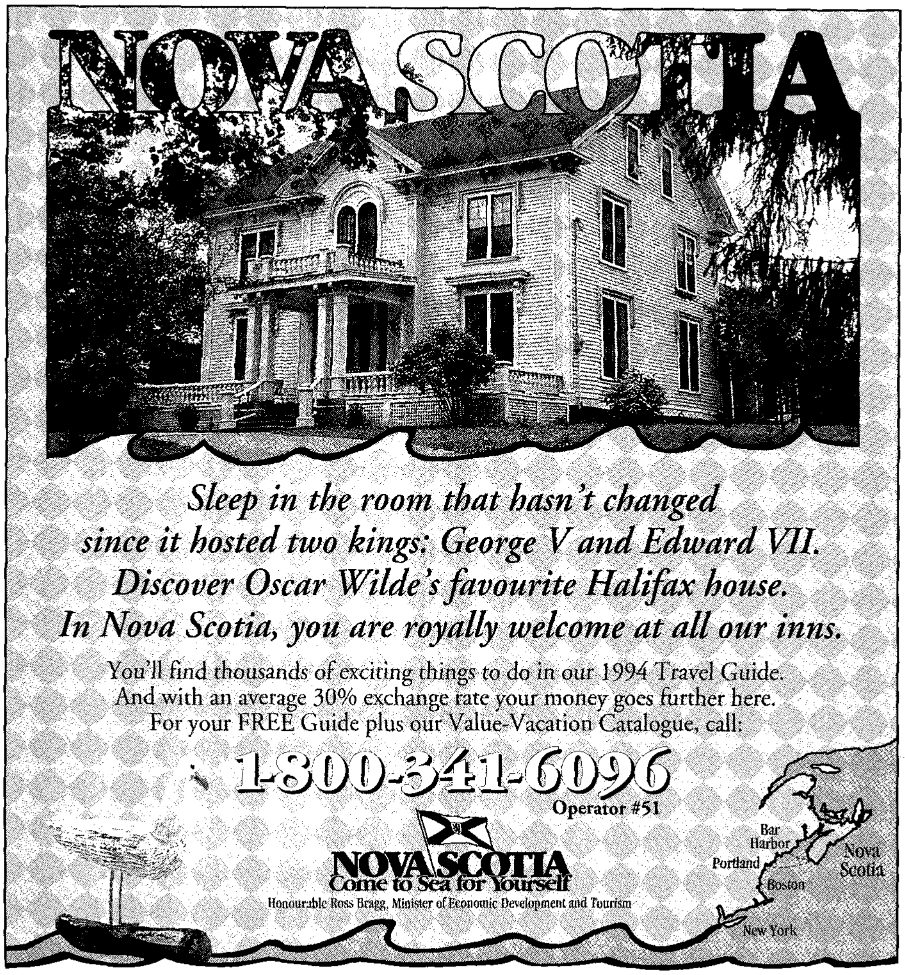

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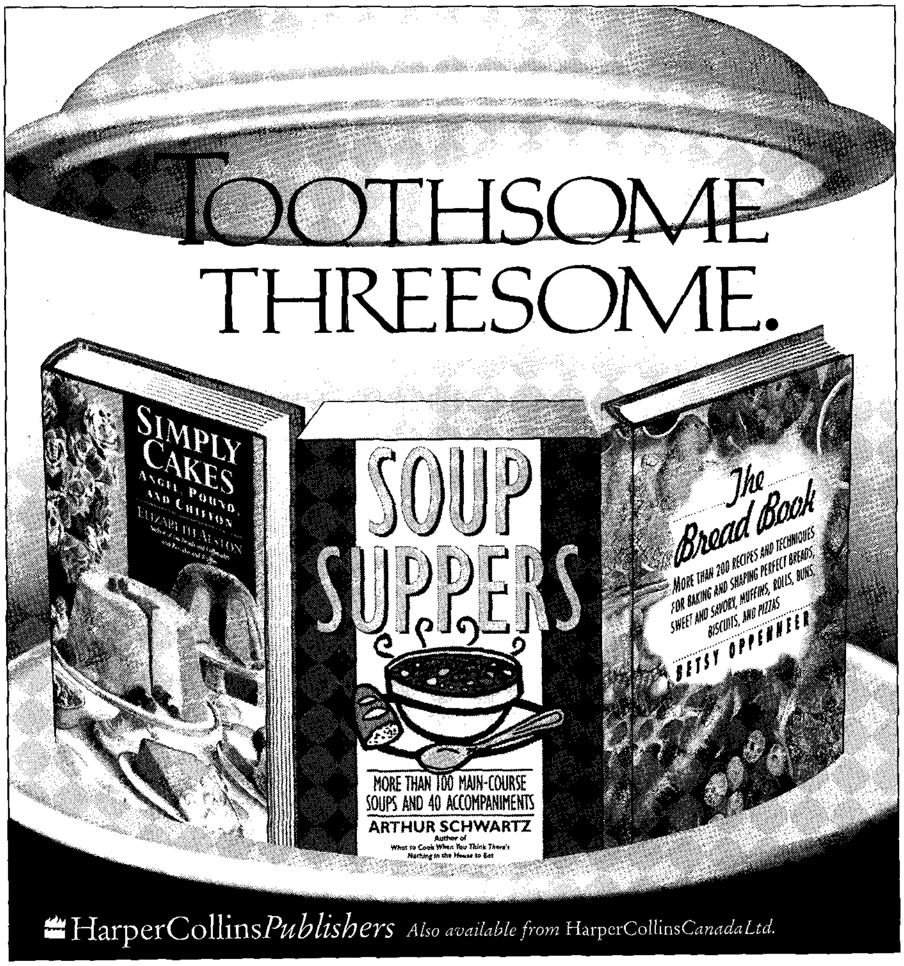

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BETSY OPPENNEER

American intellectuals who represent an integrationist vision of the country's history and culture." By design, Ellison's is a far wider, less provincial constituency. For twenty-five years as a professor of American Literature, I've witnessed students of different races, genders, and backgrounds discover, like Ellison's narrator, the "beautiful absurdity of [their] American identity" from reading "Invisible Man." Because of Ellison's art, many Americans have come to embrace his view that "whatever else the true American is, he is also somehow black." And, whatever else Ralph Ellison is, he is a true American kinsman.

JOHN F. CALLAHAN
Portland, Ore.

NAZI ARCHIVES

As Gerald Posner's article "Secrets of the Files" (March 14th) implied, it does seem ludicrous to transfer control of the files in the Berlin Document Center to the German government before an adequate copy is made. However, the tone of the article seemed to question whether the German people had any dignity at all, not just whether the records might in some way be compromised. I suppose German dignity will always be looked on dubiously. However, the B.D.C. will always be intrinsically German, and only within that context will it be of any historical significance.

F. RAHNENFUEHRER
Valle, Ariz.

With racism and a general disregard for human rights burgeoning all over the world, burying the extermination of a race of people and the sort of mind that justified such a massacre beneath a blanket of bureaucratic privacy is dangerous. People of all races and ages consider the atrocities of the S.S. and think, How can this have happened? I finished Gerald Posner's article about the transfer of the B.D.C. and I thought, How can *this* have happened?

ELIZABETH T. KURLAND
Philadelphia, Penn.

Letters should be as brief as possible, and sent with the writer's name, address, and daytime phone number to "In the Mail," The New Yorker, 20 West 43rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10036. They may be edited for length and clarity.

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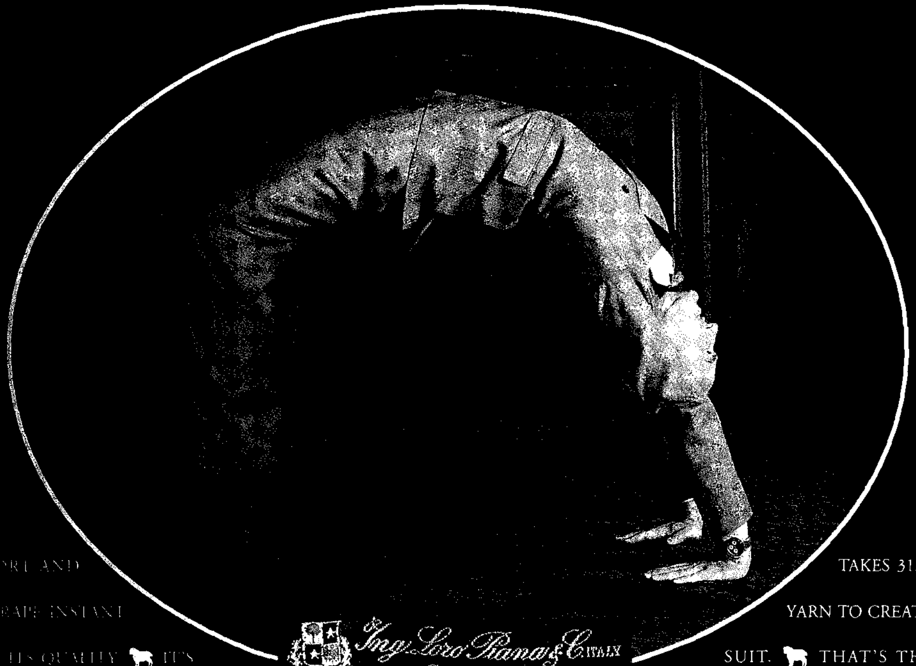

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

Hayseed Catalogue

PRO baseball slides back into town this week, but Jarrod Emick, currently slugging away as Joe Hardy in "Damn Yankees," isn't dreaming about a trip up to the stadium, or even about softball glory this summer in the Broadway Show League. Over dinner, the twenty-four-year-old actor is talking about South Dakota. About his family's twenty-eight-hundred-acre ranch, near Hot Springs. ("I've heard every joke there is about sheep," he says.) About his teen-age summers at the Black Hills Playhouse. ("I've seen some great performances there—really.") About his two years at South Dakota State University. ("It's not the mecca of the theatre world, but I got to play leads as a freshman, and how many Juilliard students can say that?") So genuine is Emick's native-son spiel that the signs of major-league sophistication—the anecdotes about Olivier, the offhand stories about Broadway buddies like Nathan Lane—go almost unnoticed.

But if Mr. Emick plays the rube, he has what New Yorkers see as a rube's redeeming feature: talent. He has, in addition to the requisite wholesome handsomeness, a knack for physical comedy and a strong, low tenor. He sang the part of Chris in the première national tour of "Miss Saigon," and he pitches a mean song as Joe Hardy, a role that he admits is "hardly the deepest character ever written." Mr. Emick is still a little puzzled as to why at parties people make more of a fuss over him, "a regular guy who just happens to be a Broadway singer," than over the latest Wall Street whiz kid. At some level, however, he must understand what another Plains artist, Willa Cather, meant when she wrote, "A voice has evena wider appeal than a fortune."

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OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.)

Amphigorey: A Musicale—Fifteen Edward Gorey stories, including "The Admonitory Hippopotamus" and "The Osbick Bird," brought to life in a musical revue. With sets by Mr. Gorey, of course, and a score by Peter Golub. Previews begin April 9. (Perry Street Theatre, 31 Perry St. 777-7474.)

Beauty and the Beast—The long-awaited musical juggernaut, based on the 1991 Disney movie, features the songs of Alan Menken and Howard Ashman, as well as a few new ones by Mr. Menken and Tim Rice. With Susan Egan as Belle, Terrence Mann as the Beast, Burke Moses as Gaston, and Tom Bosley as Belle's father. In previews. (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4100.)

Desert of Roses—An avant-garde spin on the "Beauty and the Beast" tale, by Robert Moran (score) and Michael John LaChiusa (libretto). Previews April 7-9. Opens April 10 at 3. (Tribeca Performing Arts Center, 199 Chambers St. 346-8510.)

Fallen Angel—Corey Glover (the vocalist from Living Colour) has the lead in this play about a rock band, written by Billy Boesky, who also wrote some songs for the show. In previews. (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 239-6200.)

Fragments—The Signature Theatre Company winds up its Edward Albee season with his most recent full-length play. Opens April 8 at 8 and runs through May 8. (Kampo Cultural Center, 31 Bond St. 279-4200.)

Medea—Diana Rigg returns to Broadway in London's Almeida Theatre production of Euripides' play. Preview on April 6. Opens April 7 at 6:45. (Longacre, 220 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

Movieland—Everett Quinton portrays any number of silver-screen divas in this Ridiculous Theatrical Company show. Preview on April 6. Opens April 7 at 8. (Charles Ludlam Theatre, 1 Sheridan Sq. 691-2271.)

Passion—Stephen Sondheim's new musical, with a book by James Lapine, who also directed. Donna Murphy, Jere Shea, and Marin Mazzie lead the cast. In previews. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Picnic—A revival of William Inge's play, by the Roundabout Theatre Company. The cast includes Ashley Judd and Polly Holliday. Directed by Scott Ellis. In previews. (Roundabout, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

The Triumph of Love—An eighteenth-century romantic comedy by Marivaux. James Magruder did the English-language adaptation. Opens April 6 at 7. (Classic Stage Company, 136 E. 13th St. 677-4210.)

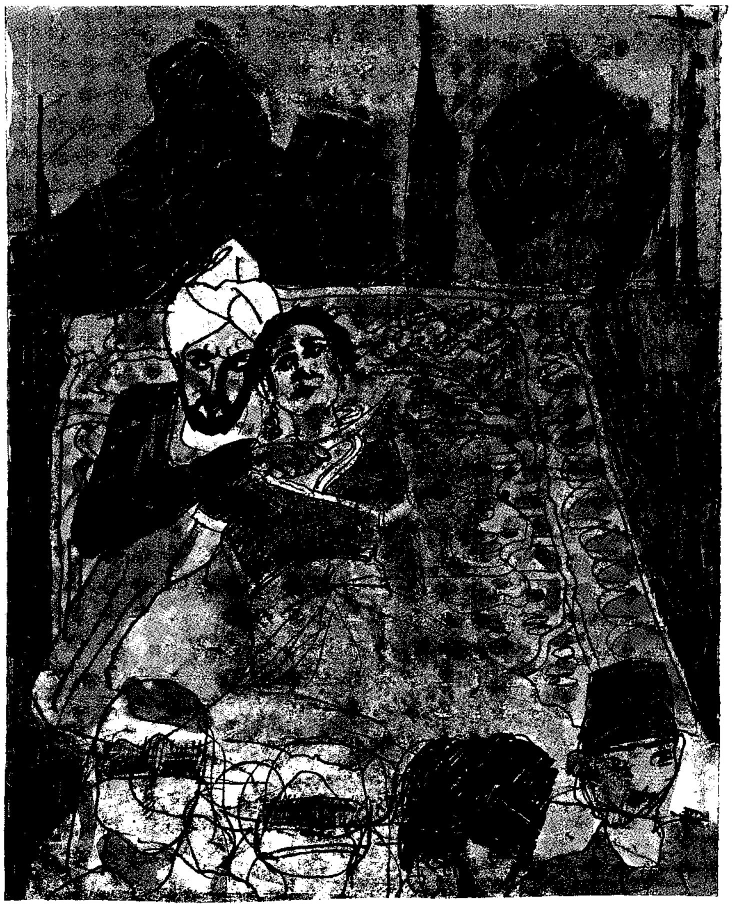
Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992—Anna Deavere Smith's one-woman show, seen recently at the Public Theatre, arrives on Broadway on April 10. (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

OPENED RECENTLY

All in the Timing—Six sparkling one-act comedies by David Ives. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

Angels in America—"Perestroika," the second half of Tony Kushner's "Angels in America," is a masterpiece. Epic in scope, superbly acted, and directed with passionate restraint by George C. Wolfe, the play employs an original, impressionistic theatrical vocabulary to show us the heart of a new age. It runs in repertory with the first half, "Millennium Approaches." ("Perestroika" was reviewed in our issue of 12/13/93; "Millennium Approaches," 5/31/93.) (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

The Arabian Nights—Mary Zimmerman wrote and directed this semi-comic revue, based on "A Thousand and One Nights," so the fact that the evening is an uneven combination of melodrama and "Benny Hill Goes to Baghdad" can be justly laid at her door. Everyone in the cast dances, plays an instrument, or sings as well as acts, and they acquit themselves with enthu-



Jenny Bacon and Christopher Donahue in "The Arabian Nights."

ROBERT ANDREW PARKER

"Who's going to make sure the trees will be here tomorrow?"

"Not an easy question. But that's what my son asked the other day. He's thinking about it. Just like everybody. He wants to know if the trees will still be around when he grows up. Well, working for Georgia-Pacific like I do, I

can tell him we're doing our part. Planting new trees by the millions. Setting aside land. Making sure the trees will always be here. For everybody. Of course, I can't speak for other companies out there. But I know we're doing what's right." Steve Delfs, Forester. **Georgia-Pacific**

THE THEATRE-Cont'd

siasm. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212. Closes April 10.)

Blown Sideways Through Life—In her sixty-fifth job, Claudia Shear charmingly and observantly tells us about her previous sixty-four, which have ranged from working in a hardware store to being a "phone girl" at a whorehouse, with a stint as a Bloomingdale's cosmetics salesgirl thrown in. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2285.)

Brothers of the Brush—This play by Jimmy Murphy focusses on three Dublin house-painters and a shady contractor. (Irish Arts Center, 553 W. 52nd St. 757-3318.)

Carousel—Nicholas Hytner's authoritative direction combines with Bob Crowley's inspired sets to successfully transplant the National Theatre's 1993 smash hit onto the Vivian Beaumont stage. Bold, beautiful, and controversial, this multicultural reinterpretation brilliantly launches Rodgers and Hammerstein into the twenty-first century. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

Damn Yankees—The big musical hit of 1955 (*nine Tonys*) is back, *in its first Broadway* revival, with Victor Garber as the Devil, Bebe Neuwirth as Lola, and Jarrod Emick as Joe Hardy. George Abbott and Douglass Wallop's book has been jarringly updated by the director, Jack O'Brien (with the help of the hundred-and-six-year-old Mr. Abbott). The result is a vehicle that swerves between fifties stodginess and nineties cynicism. But the cast delivers Richard Adler and Jerry Ross's music with sporty energy, and Rob Marshall has created some lively dance numbers. (4/4/94) (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

The Day the Bronx Died—Akili Prince, Luis A. Laporte, Jr., and Neal Huff portray three teen-age friends—two black, one Jewish—in Michael Henry Brown's play. Also with Leon Addison Brown. (American Jewish Theatre, 307 W. 26th St. 633-9797. Closes April 17.)

Family Secrets—Sherry Glaser is the sole, physically adept, very funny performer in this comedy about a Jewish family, which she wrote with Greg Howells. (Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

The Flowering Peach—Clifford Odets' 1954 play, a retelling of the story of Noah and the Ark, is a comedy of righteousness, but this sleepy National Actors Theatre production, directed by Martin Charnin, manages only lacklustre cartoons. With Eli Wallach, Anne Jackson, and Josh Mostel. (4/4/94) (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6280. Closes April 24.)

Four Dogs and a Bone—The "bone" of John Patrick Shanley's satiric comedy is a movie, and the "four dogs" are its producer, writer, and two actresses, who together make the funniest foursome in town. With Arabella Field, Peter Jacobson, Ann Magnuson, and Reg Rogers. (11/15/93) (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782.)

Jackie Mason: Politically Incorrect—The comedian/commentator's new one-man show. (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat—A considerably pumped-up version of Andrew Lloyd Webber's first musical, with former soap star Michael Damian in the title role. The Bible was never like this. (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 307-4100.)

Laughter on the 23rd Floor—Neil Simon's twenty-seventh Broadway play, about a group of writers for a fictionalized version of "Your Show of Shows," is one of his finest comic efforts. Directed by Jerry Zaks, with Mark Linn-Baker, Lewis J. Stadlen, Nathan Lane, Ron Orbach, John Slattery, and J. K. Simmons. (12/20/93) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

Marathon Dancing—In a site-specific work that takes place in a breathtakingly gaudy 1909 Masonic ballroom, six couples and assorted other Depression-era characters talk, dance, and sing, evoking the sweaty desperation of a winner-takes-all dance marathon. It's a great opportunity to hear such almost forgotten tunes as "Are You Havin' Any Fun?" and "Wake Up and Live." Written by Laura Harrington, and conceived and directed by Anne Bogart. (Masonic Hall, 71 W. 23rd St., third floor. 777-7474. Closes April 10.)

The Mollusc—A turn-of-the-century English social satire by Hubert Henry Davies. (Pearl, 125 W. 22nd St. 645-7708.)

Mort Sahl's America—The humorist, whose résumé includes speechwriting for both John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan, in a solo engagement. (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 239-6200.)

My Fair Lady—Howard Davies' genial new production of the Lerner and Loewe musical. Melissa Errico lends a fine voice and an attractive presence to the role of Eliza, and Paxton Whitehead plays Henry Higgins. On April 8, Michael Moriarty assumes the role. (1/17/94) (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200.)

New York Rock—Yoko Ono's new musical is less a complete book than a series of black-outs, punctuated by songs in a pastiche of stage and rock styles. The inescapably autobiographical theme concerns the way violent acts can thwart love between men and women. The staging is inventive, the vigorous cast sings its heart out, and there are a few wonderful moments, but they never mask *the awkward and willfully ingenuous nature* of the venture. Directed by Phil Oesterman. (WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523. Closes April 17.)

Pounding Nails in the Floor with My Forehead—The latest solo show by the boss of monologuists, Eric Bogosian, is basically a continuation of his 1990 "Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll": portraits of a dozen alarming characters—the manic, the depressive, the deluded, and the deranged—who have squatter's rights in Bogosian's mind. (2/21/94) (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 307-4100. Closes April 24.)

Richard II—Shakespeare's history play, with Michael Stuhlbarg and André Braugher. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

Ricky Jay & His 52 Assistants—With a Mephistophelean smoothness, the master sleight-of-hand artist discourses on the history of trickery and performs illusions that will amaze even those who wouldn't normally go out of their way to see card tricks. Under the direction of David Mamet, who is right at home in the slightly sinister man's world of magic, Mr. Jay makes willing and delighted fools of his audience. Performances resume April 12. (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 873-6103.)

She Loves Me—The Roundabout's production of the 1963 Bock-Harnick-Masteroff musical. (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 307-4100.)

Stomp—A group of eight British rhythm specialists who use unconventional percussion instruments. The noise is terrific. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477.)

Three Tall Women—A moving, poetic play by Edward Albee, with Myra Carter, Marian Seldes, and Jordan Baker representing three generations of women trying to sort out their pasts. Directed by Lawrence Sacharow. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 239-6200.)

Who Will Carry the Word?—Charlotte Delbo, a survivor of Auschwitz, wrote this play *about women in the death camps,* which is presented here by the Willow Cabin Theatre Company, under Edward Berkeley's direction. Seen at this theatre last fall, the show has resumed performances, with almost the same cast of twenty women. (Judith Anderson, 422 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

LONG RUNS

beau jest: Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. . . . **blood brothers:** Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **blue man group/tubes:** Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . . **cats:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **crazy for you:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **the fantasticks:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **forever plaid:** Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400. . . . **guys and dolls:** Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **kiss of the spider woman:** Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **les misérables:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **miss saigon:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . . **nunsense:** Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. . . . **perfect crime:** Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401. . . . **the phantom of the opera:** Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **the sisters rosensweig:** Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200. . . . **tony n' tina's wedding:** St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St. 279-4200. . . . **the who's tommy:** St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.

Morrissey at Carnegie Hall.

MARK ULRIKSEN

DANCE

Joffrey Ballet—The opening performances of the engagement. April 6 at 7:30, April 9 at 8, and April 10 at 2: "Italian Suite," "Valentine," "Return to a Strange Land," and "Les Présages." . . . ¶ April 7 and April 10 at 7:30, April 8 at 8, and April 9 at 2: "Billboards." . . . ¶ April 12 at 7:30: "Les Patineurs" (company première), "A Tri-Fling" (première), "The Garden of Villandry," and "Light Rain." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Through April 17.)

Peter Pucci Plus Dancers—In "Moon of the Falling Leaves," "Then All Is Still Again," "Sing," "Rapt," "Love Duets," "Hoop-La," and "Ayego." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. April 6-9 at 8, April 9 at 2—an abbreviated family matinée program—and April 10 at 2 and 7:30.)

O Vertigo—The opening performance of a one-week engagement by a Montreal-based company, in "La Chambre Blanche." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. April 12 at 8. Through April 17.)

NIGHT LIFE

Morrisseymania

"Now my heart is full," sings Steven Patrick Morrissey on his splendid new album, "Vauxhall and I," but he is not to be taken seriously. (The title refers to a London park that at the turn of the century was a haven for illicit liaisons.) Morrissey is always crooning about how people are persecuting him, and that, too, is a little hard to believe. After all, the current issues of *Details*, *Raygun*, and *Q* feature his glamorous mug on their covers, with lengthy interviews inside, and the new record has got rapturous reviews. It should be more difficult than ever for him to sing that he's being ignored, but he does it anyway—and quite well. How can you fault a songwriter whose approach to seduction involves warning a recalcitrant lover "I bear more grudges than lonely high-court judges"?

Ever since his days as the misanthropic voice of the Smiths, one of rock's perfect groups, Morrissey has peppered his songs with snide comments ("Vicar in a Tutu"), whimsy ("Girlfriend in a Coma"), melodrama ("Death of a Disco Dancer"), and real poetry ("How Soon Is Now"). He is one of the very few pop stars with a droll mastery of the English language, and he has a great deadpan delivery. On the new album, the way he sings "Nothing appears to be between the ears of the lazy sunbathers" is classic Morrissey—slow, deliberate, and wickedly contemptuous. For two days at Carnegie Hall (April 11-12), this icon of self-love and his muscular new band will be preaching to the converted. His fans will bring him flowers, they'll know all the words, they'll reach out to him and call his name. Apart from Springsteen's, Morrissey's audience might be the most lovingly vociferous around.

CONCERTS

Carnegie Hall Salutes the Jazz Masters: Verve Records at 50—The high-profile jazz label Verve Records is turning fifty, and a host of high-profile jazz artists will be on hand for its birthday/golden-anniversary party at Carnegie Hall this week. Joe Henderson, Abbey Lincoln, Betty Carter, Roy Hargrove, John McLaughlin, and Christian McBride are just a few of the current Verve musicians and alumni scheduled to show up; in addition, there will be performances by Pat Metheny, Bruce Hornsby, Art Porter, Kenny Washington, and the Carnegie Hall Jazz Band. Herbie Hancock and R. & B. star Vanessa Williams will host the event. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. April 6 at 7.)

Hilton Ruiz—This pianist's roots run deep. His serious jazz chops never obscure the spicy Latin accents that enliven everything he plays. Ruiz's trio will be joined by flutist Dave Valentin. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. April 8 at 8.)

Kathie Lee Gifford—According to her *Who's Who* entry, this half of Regis & Kathie Lee is not only a "television personality" but also a "gospel singer." With Peter Nero. (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. April 9 at 8.)

Betty Carter: Jazz Ahead '95—This showcase concert includes a headlining performance by Ms. Carter, an outspoken proponent of musical education, who will introduce sixteen outstanding young performers from around the country. (Majestic Theatre, 651 Fulton Ave., Brooklyn. 1-718 636-4100. April 9 at 8 and April 10 at 3.)

The Allman Brothers Band—Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. April 6 and April 8-10 at 8.

"New Sounds Live" Concert—Steve Gorn, Richard Horowitz, and Ralph Samuelson in a program of Indian, Moroccan, and Japanese flute music. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. April 7 at 8.)

Tito Puente and His Latin Jazz Ensemble—With guest artist Phil Woods, in a "Highlights in Jazz" concert. (Pace Downtown Theatre, Spruce St. between Nassau and Gold Sts. 346-1715. April 7 at 8.)

Bobby Caldwell—With Candy Dulfer & Funky Stuff. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. April 8 at 8.)

Rainforest Foundation Benefit—Larry Adler, Elton John, Branford Marsalis, Aaron Neville, Luciano Pavarotti, James Taylor, Tammy Wynette, Sting, and others. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. April 9 at 7.)

"Lyrics & Lyricists"—The series salutes Carolyn Leigh in this go-round. The performers are Claiborne Cary, Jeff Harnar, Dorothy Loudon, Billy Stritch, Tarik Winston, and Sara Zahn. Christine Baranski is the narrator. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100. April 10 at 2:30 and 8 and April 11 at 2 and 8.)

Urban Bush Women—Leading a "community sing" of spirituals, work songs, and protest songs. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie Parish Hall, Second Ave. at 10th St. April 10 at 3. No tickets necessary, but reservations are advised. Call 674-8194.)

Morrissey—Echobelly will open. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. April 11-12 at 8.) . . . **note:** Morrissey's first three songs in the first night's show will be broadcast on the Sony JumboTron screen in Times Square for the benefit of fans who were unable to obtain tickets. A radio simulcast, on a station to be announced, is being arranged.

JAZZ AND BLUES

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—The **stanley jordan** band continues through April 10. Jordan's two-handed tapping guitar technique is still amazing, especially in person. His new record, "Bolero," features material by Hendrix and Ravel. Beginning April 12: the **ramsey lewis** quintet, with **special efx.** Dining.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—**joe lovano** appears through April 9, with John Hicks and Walter Booker. New York's most satisfying saxophonist, Lovano loves to place himself in new contexts. Alongside fierce pianist Hicks and bassist Booker, he will have the freedom and flexibility to roam, and to allow his self-perpetuating melodic powers to envelop the room. The **james williams** trio is in on April 10. Pianist Williams combines the earthy grit of his native Memphis with the facility that first drew him raves in the late eighties, when he was part of Art Blakey's last great band. Starting April 11: **santi debriano.** Debriano is fast becoming a first-call bassist for discerning leaders; here he fronts his own unit. Joining Panama's own will be pianist Dave Kikoski, drummer Tommy Campbell, and saxophonist Donny McAslin. Dining.

The Cooler, 416 W. 14th St. (229-0785)—Thursday nights belong to **giant step,** a roving collective of musicians, rappers, and d.j.s who mix jazz, funk, and hip-hop.

Down Beat, 101 Seventh Ave. S. (620-4000)—A long, warm, wood-panelled room with upholstered banquettes, a nicely appointed bar, and a reliable roster of jazz names. Murals

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of Diz, Bird, and Basie adorn the walls, so the players are always in good company.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7900)—The seating arrangement in this long, narrow, red-velvet-and-mirror-walled basement makes flying coach seem roomy; nevertheless, it's one of the city's top jazz spots—thanks largely to the club's talent bookers. But watch your head. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL** leads a trio. Dining.

Fez, 380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—A comfortable neo-Moroccan bar and lounge, hidden inside the Time Café, with satin couches and mosaic tables. The downstairs room, where bands perform, is rather plain in comparison, but still a sleek and comfortable spot to take in a show. **ANN MAGNUSON** performs on April 11. The **MINGUS BIG BAND** packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

Five Spot, 4 W. 31st St. (631-0100)—Set in a mammoth turn-of-the-century ballroom, this jazz club is all marble and gilt, with a few modern touches, such as the zebra-patterned carpeting in the V.I.P. room upstairs. Dining.

Knickerbocker, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—Brass rails, vintage posters, Hirschfeld drawings, and a piano. Through April 9: **JOANNE BRACKEEN** and **CECIL MC BEE.** Tapping into the contemporary wellspring created by Tyner, Hancock, and Evans, pianist Brackeen has fashioned an engaging personal sound. Everything she touches, from American songbook standards and Brazilian melodies to her own modernist pieces, is stamped with jazz authority. Like an old married couple, she and McBee, her longtime bassist, seem to read each other's minds, completing each other's musical sentences.

Knitting Factory, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—This club, run by a couple of forward-looking Wisconsinites, specializes in all manner of neo-this and post-that ensembles. The atmosphere is low-key, low-budget bohemian. **LEE RANALDO,** of Sonic Youth, is in on April 8. Hasidic rocker **YOSSIE PIAMENTA** performs on April 10.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—Woody Allen has kept his night job as clarinet player in the **NEW ORLEANS FUNERAL AND RAGTIME ORCHESTRA,** a Dixieland-jazz ensemble now in its twentieth year. **VERNEL BAGNERIS** continues in "Hoo-Dude," his tribute to Jelly Roll Morton. Closed Sundays.

Sounds of Brazil, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A great grass hut with a fruit-and-bamboo motif, dedicated to calypso, reggae, and bossa nova. Latin-jazz luminary **TITO PUENTE** stops by on April 11. **ASTRUD GILBERTO** arrives for three nights, on April 12. Closed Sundays. Dining.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—A jazz outpost where the musicians are always top-shelf. A big band belonging to **GIL GOLDSTEIN** is in action on Mondays. The **HAL GALPER** trio plays through April 10. A familiar name from the seventies, pianist Galper still provides a bracing sense of effortless swing and spirited modernism. The **MICHAEL CARVIN** quintet starts on April 12. Dining.

Tavern on the Green, Central Park W. at 67th St. (873-3200)—This legendary tourist haven makes serious jazz fans welcome in the Chestnut Room. It resembles a hunting lodge and is every bit as over the top as the rest of the establishment, but the bookings are impressive. Celebrated pianist **TOMMY FLANAGAN** is here all week.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—The world's most famous jazz club is also the last place in town that still looks, feels, and smells like a classic jazz club—subterranean, smoky, and thick with the spirits of past masters. The **ART FARMER** quintet continues through April 10. Farmer's work on the flugelhorn proves that urbanity has its place even in jazz's spontaneous and emotional universe. By picking the perfect notes and playing them with a burnished elegance born of utter precision, Farmer makes virtues of control and calculation. His sophisticated, ardent playing distills bop down to a purely lyrical state. Farmer's model band features saxophonist Jerome Richardson, pianist Geoff Keezer, bassist Kenny Davis, and drummer Marvin (Smitty) Smith. The **PHAROAH SANDERS** quartet begins an engagement on April 12. The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sway on Mondays.

Liz Phair at the Academy.

LIZZIE HOLLEY

Visiones, 125 Macdougal St., at W. 3rd St. (673-5576)—A tiny, low-key supper club where the jazz, like the Spanish-American cuisine, can take on a spicy, multicultural flavor. The **GARY PEACOCK** quartet is here on April 6-7. Peacock is a deeply cerebral player who can swing a band clear off the stage when he wants to. Most often seen in Keith Jarrett's trio, this bassist is a considerable composer and crafty bandleader as well; he deserves higher visibility.

STANDARDS AND CABARET

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Talk about extended runs: the Algonquin booked singer and actress **ANDREA MARCOVICCI** for sixteen weeks last year, and now she's back for another eleven. She'll be ranging through golden-age standards and more up-to-date material during April; in May, the engagement turns into an Irving Berlin tribute. Dining.

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A cool green music hall that features a steady stream of international pop and cabaret stars, as well as the occasional drag queen. The Ballroom is also a tapas restaurant—if you haven't had dinner, you may never make it to the show. Cabaret legend **BLOSSOM DEARIE** continues on Friday and Saturday evenings.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a snug, windowless enclave in the doorman district, features discreet waiters and wraparound pastel murals. **MARILYN MC COO** finishes her one-week engagement on April 6. Designing woman **DIXIE CARTER** begins a two-week run on April 7. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in Bemelmans Bar, **BARBARA CARROLL** presides at the piano.

Eighty Eights, 228 W. 10th St. (924-0088)—**BABY JANE DEXTER** performs on April 9.

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—A plush, old-fashioned night club, sixty-five floors above it all, complete with Art Deco fixtures, intimate glitter, and a panoramic view as dizzying as the tab. **ANNIE ROSS** will be here through April 23. In jazz circles, Ross is best known as one third of the innovative fifties vocal trio Lambert, Hendricks and Ross, but her long and varied career has also encompassed cabaret, theatre, and film. Her current act draws on all these credits, ranging from standards to songs from the soundtrack of "Short Cuts," in which Ross portrayed an over-the-hill alcoholic jazz singer. Fortunately, at sixty-three, Ross herself is still in top form. Closed Mondays.

ROCK AND FOLK

Academy, 234 W. 43rd St.—In the heart of the theatre district, a haven for those whose musical tastes run left of "Tommy." The Canadian band **CRASH TEST DUMMIES** is in on April 6. The Dummies mostly offer earnest, even corny pop songs, but front man Brad Roberts sings them as if he were channelling Iggy Pop's wickedly wry bass through his gut. Two current critics' darlings, the **AFGHAN WHIGS** and the **SPINANES,** team up on April 7. The headlining Whigs specialize in—surprise!—angst-ridden guitar pop; the Spinanes offer more of the same, albeit with an ethereal-voiced female singer, a hot item among today's alternative bands (see the Sundays, the Cranberries, etc.). Conversely, singer **LIZ PHAIR,** who plays here April 8-9, earned her critical cachet with exhilarating guerrilla raids across the rock gender lines and her raunchy post-feminist songwriting. Phair's widely acclaimed début album, last year's "Exile in Guyville," bears little musical resemblance to the classic Stones album that its title alludes to, but some of her lyrics might make even Mick or Keith blush. The **RAINCOATS** open for Phair. For concert information, call 249-8870.

A.K.A, 77 W. Houston St., at Wooster St. (673-7325)—Jazz, hip-hop, and world beat meet in this small, velvet-draped club.

Blarney Star, 43 Murray St. (732-2873)—April 8: Irish fiddler **EILEEN IVERS.**

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—This week, the club continues its twentieth-anniversary celebration, which will run through late April. On April 6, **FOUR BITCHIN' BABES**—among them acerbic folkie **CHRISTINE LAVIN**—perform with a guest babe. Guitarist **JOHN MC LAUGHLIN** swings by on April 7-8, with his new band, the Free Spirits. McLaughlin, whose credits include a stint with Tony Williams' Lifetime and groundbreaking work on Miles Davis's "Jack Johnson," is best known as the founder of the iconoclastic Mahavishnu Orchestra. His current band, which features organist Joey DeFrancesco and drummer Dennis Chambers, is a far more groove-conscious ensemble. **DARLENE LOVE** continues her Tuesday-night stand.

Café Sin-é, 122 St. Marks Pl. (982-0370)—A small peach-walled storefront, Sin-é is usually given over to a young, earthy crowd that drinks Rolling Rock or espresso and waits for some Irish musician or other to blow in and play a set. Singer-songwriter **REBECCA MARTIN** appears on April 11.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—Rock and roll always sounds best in a dump, which may be why this legendary club is still thriving: the management has had the good sense not to renovate. The progressive-pop band **SLOWDIVE** appears on April 7.

Downtime, 251 W. 30th St. (695-2747)—A friendly split-level bar with a dazzling quasi-Cubist paint job and an above-average pool table. **BUD E. LUV** performs April 6-7.

Grand, 76 E. 13th St. (777-0600)—A serious room for serious rock-and-rolling. You can either vibrate up front, near a wall-o'-speakers, or lounge around the bar in the back and follow the show on a video monitor. **SWEET LIZARD ILLTET** performs on April 9.

Irving Plaza, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—This sprawling two-floor establishment has been all things to all people: meeting hall, rock club, jazz club, Off Broadway theatre. On April 6: **JIMMIE DALE GILMORE.** Gilmore grew up in Lubbock, where he soaked up just about every pure-blooded sound a West Texas boy can hear. Now forty-eight, the singer has recorded five albums; the most recent, last year's "Spinning Around the Sun," is a high, lonesome masterwork that lives and breathes country-music history. . . . ¶ The Swing Dance Society gathers here every Sunday night, at the Continental Club. The dancers all share a passion for the Lindy Hop, a dance that involves a lot of whirling and the occasional display of underwear. Sets from eight until midnight. For information on the society, call 696-9737.

Limelight, Sixth Ave. at 20th St. (807-7850)—A church turned eighties hot spot, this unholy venue currently plays host to a variety of techno and alternative acts. On April 10: **entombed** and **unsane.**

Ludlow Street Café, 165 Ludlow St. (353-0536)—An unassuming basement restaurant-bar, where you can drink cheap and catch live music nightly. Mondays belong to **beat rodeo,** a straight-shooting bar band that plays a mixture of country, blues, Dylan, Byrds, Velvets, and various pop curiosities.

Manny's Car Wash, 1558 Third Ave., at 87th St. (369-2583)—The Upper East Side blues. The **sandra wright** band plays on April 6.

Maxwell's, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken. (1-201 798-4064)—It's a little bit Seattle, a little bit Jersey, a little bit downtown, and a great place to catch rising rockers. **slowdive** lands here on April 6, the night before its CB's gig; on April 9, the **afghan whigs** wind down from their April 7 Academy show. **kevn kinney** arrives on April 12. In 1993, Kinney took a sabbatical from his regular job, fronting the rootsy cult band Drivin' N' Cryin', to record his second solo album. Released earlier this year, "Down Out Law" brings the singer-songwriter's penchant for raw, cranky lyricism to the fore, combining spare acoustic arrangements with vocals and imagery that clearly owe a lot to Dylan.

Paddy Reilly's Music Bar, 495 Second Ave., at 28th St. (686-1210)—This Irish outpost has become known as the birthplace of the roots-and-rebellion rock band **black 47,** which acknowledged its paternity by putting a picture of the joint on the cover of its new album, "Fire of Freedom." Prepare for a packed room, flowing Guinness, and an Irish-hootenanny atmosphere. Black 47 usually plays on Wednesdays and Saturdays, and Speir Mor (Gaelic for Big Sky) performs for a hearty following on Fridays. Séisiún—a traditional Irish jam—is on Thursday nights. When there's no live music, the jukebox blasts everything from the Chieftains to Greg Trooper to Paddy Reilly, the Irish folksinger who owns the place.

Rodeo Bar, 375 Third Ave., at 27th St. (683-6500)—A Western theme bar, attached to a Southwestern restaurant. The walls simulate a log cabin, a buffalo head blows smoke through its nostrils, there's a horse trailer that's been converted into a bar, and you get peanuts for eating and, occasionally, throwing. But wait, there's more: video rodeos, New Mexico memorabilia, and live music nightly—country, blues, folk, rock, hillbilly.

Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. (247-0200)—Ballroom dancing on Thursdays and Sundays. The rest of the week: another dark, sweaty rock club, with flannel-clad stage divers and the occasional whirling mosh pit. On April 8: **crowded house,** with guest **sheryl crow.** Crowded House made its auspicious 1987 début as a trio, led by Neil Finn, a graduate of the eccentric New Zealand band Split Enz; it reëmerged in the nineties as a quartet, with Finn's big brother Tim—Split Enz' ex-front man—in tow. House has always been Neil's castle, though, its best work distinguished by his wistful grace and his stunning way with a pop melody. On the band's current album, "Together Alone," the elder Finn has been replaced by keyboardist-guitarist Mark Hart. While the album isn't the near-masterpiece that its predecessor, "Woodface" (1991), was, it has some lovely, graceful moments. **king's x** is in on April 9. King's X combines grinding hard-rock textures with a keen melodic sensibility and what the band's press release describes as "Anglophilic harmonies" (a coy Beatles reference, no doubt). The group's current album, "Dogface," was overseen by producer Brendan O'Brien (Pearl Jam, Stone Temple Pilots, Red Hot Chili Peppers); since these guys can really play, the new songs should translate well to the stage.

Tramps, 51 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—A broad, spacious, and agreeable club, near what was once called Ladies' Mile but might now be termed the pool-hall district. On April 9: Fabulous Thunderbird vocalist **kim wilson** makes a rare solo appearance, with **roomful of blues.** . . . ¶ Next door, at Tramps Café, rockabilly with **matt (guitar) murphy.**

Wetlands, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—A warehouse complex for neo-hippies and other party animals. The **screamin' cheetah wheelies** are in on April 7.

REALLY LATE-NIGHT RESTAURANTS

(A selection of places to eat in the city that never sleeps. Call for exact kitchen closings.)

Carnegie Delicatessen & Restaurant, Seventh Ave. at 55th St. (757-2245)—"Dispensing delectable deli daily from dawn to distraction." The wait staff gives good shtick, fat sour pickles are yours for the taking, and the sandwiches are extremely large-scale. Blintzes, matzo-ball soup, chopped liver, and pastrami are a few of the house specialties.

Coffee Shop, 29 Union Square West, at E. 16th St. (243-7969)—Pulsing music from the adjoining bar spills into the dimly lit dining room, where spicy Brazilian food is served. One bowl of the *sopa de peixe bahia* (a seafood chowder with lots of saffron) or *caldo verde* and you'll be a wide-awake samba fool. For extra pep, drink a guarana—ginseng soda with a caffeine kick.

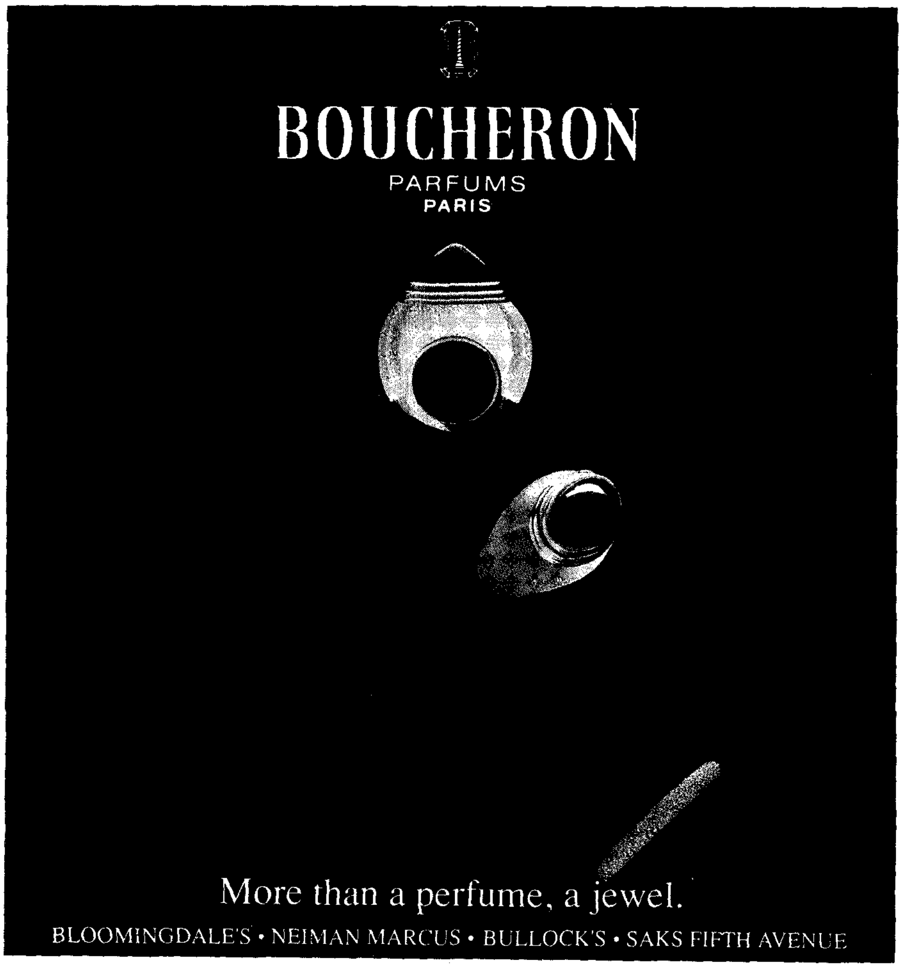
Veselka Restaurant, 144 Second Ave., at 9th St. (228-9682)—Comfort food is available in a variety of guises here, to satisfy the most intense carbo cravings. The mostly homemade Ukrainian fare includes stuffed cabbage, potato pancakes, pierogi, and borscht, in generous, stick-to-the-ribs portions.

Brasserie, 100 E. 53rd St. (751-4840)—Designed by Philip Johnson, the room is simple, with piped-in accordion music that can get a little annoying. Let onion soup gratinée, garlicky escargots, or a comforting cassoulet engage your appetite while the art work—including plates by Picasso and photos by Bresson—occupies your eye.

Lox Around the Clock, Sixth Ave. at 21st St. (691-3535)—The jumpy visuals and high ceiling create a busy backdrop to new American food with a Middle Eastern accent. There's a lot of grilling going on here: burgers, chicken, and fish. Munch on a grilled salmon club and get lost in the music videos, which, like the Nova, are available around the clock.

Howard Johnson, 1551 Broadway, at 46th St. (354-1445)—This midtown mainstay may look a little crusty, but it's somehow reassuring that the trademark orange-and-blue can hold its own against the golden arches across the street. Fried clams are still on the menu, and the sherbet is still served in frosted metal cups. Food for nostalgia buffs.

Lucky Strike, 59 Grand St., off West Broadway (941-0479)—It's small, smoky, and loud but has good food, a friendly wait staff, and a casual hipness. Bread baked daily on the premises is the basis for hearty sandwiches. Also: lamb chops, roast chicken, steak au poivre, and steak frites. Brownie sundae is a construct of sweet stuff heaped high.



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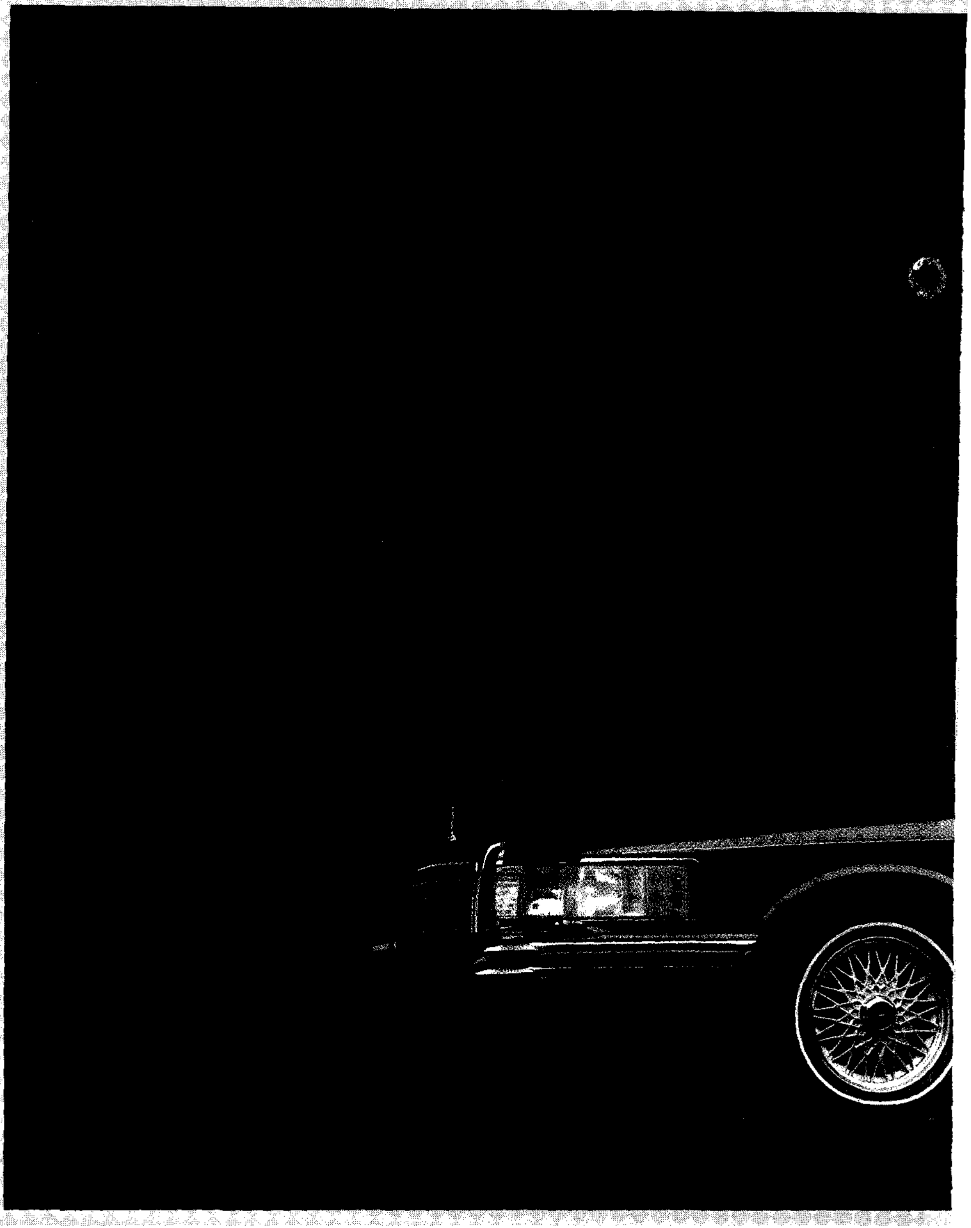

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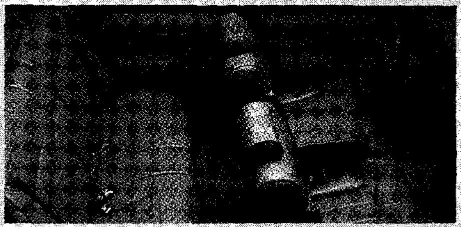

appropria reward fo your life-time of accomplis ment, you might even consider an acceptance speech. The Town Car certainly gives you plent to talk about, beginning with the traditional

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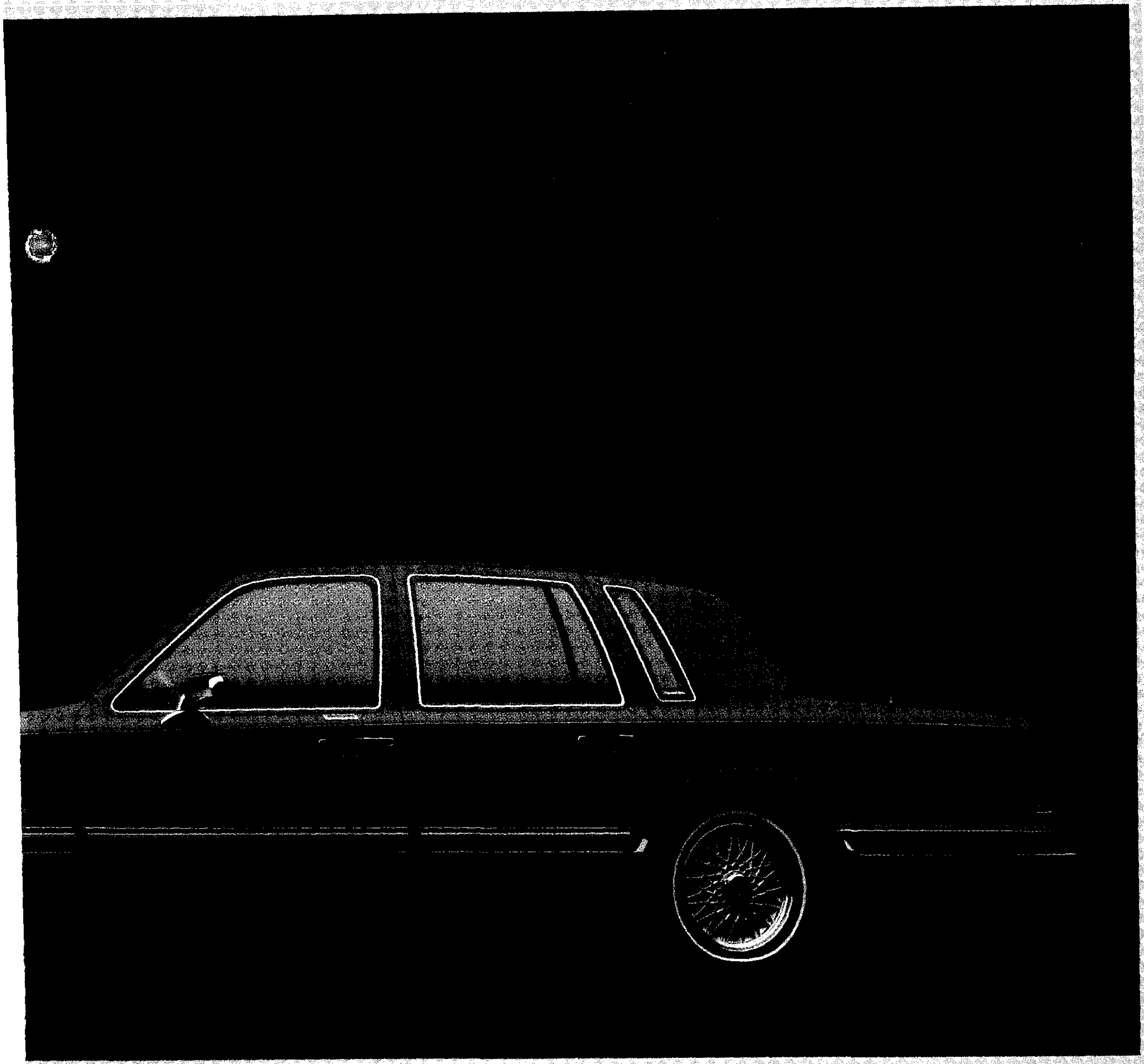

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paciousness of its interior. You could go on bout Lincoln's commitment to safety technology hat includes standard ABS brakes and dual air ags.* And you'll never run out of compliments or its proliferation of elegant appointments. inally, you might praise the powerful V-8 engine, nd the smoothness of that legendary quiet ride. nd every Lincoln is backed by the Lincoln ommitment, a comprehensive ownership benefits program that includes 24-hour Roadside Service Assistance.

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LINCOLN

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ART

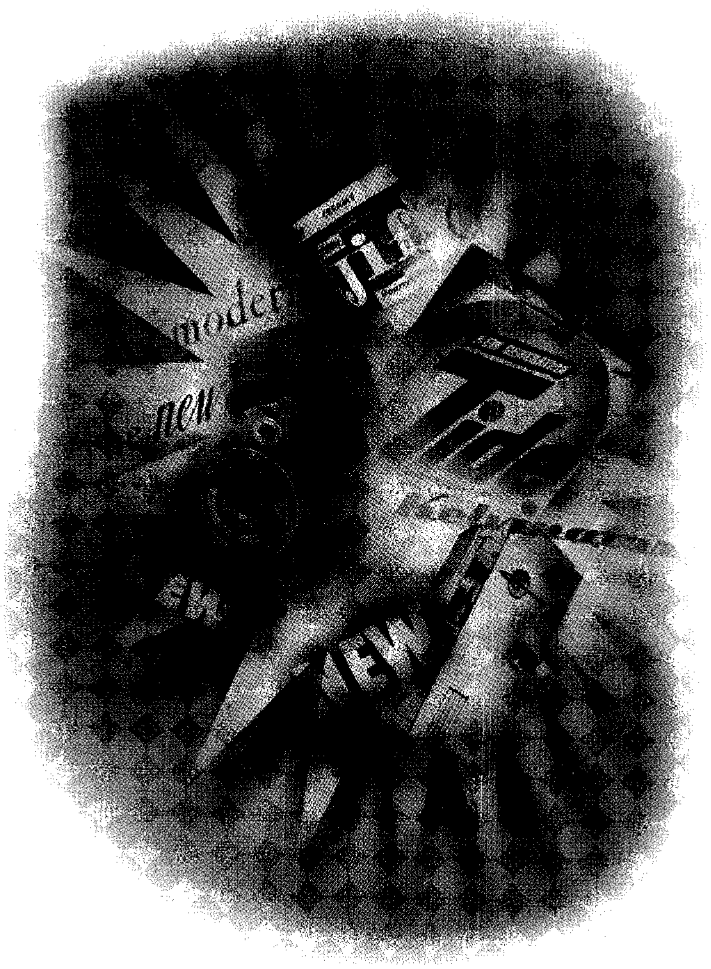
Zero-Sum Games

SPEAKING of his art, which usually addresses ecological issues, Mark Dion has remarked, "I feel there are already too many things in the world as it is, so I never actually produce anything myself." Dion's statement accords with a spirit of conservation and echoes the aesthetic behind Duchamp's readymades. In his Belize-zoo project, Dion didn't make a work of art about the zoo as institution or the kinds of animals that it collects; he made signs for the zoo, a utilitarian, unironic exercise in the codification and dissemination of information. Ultimately, it is the ideological status of knowledge itself that is Dion's true subject.

Dion's current installation at American Fine Arts (22 Wooster Street; through April 9), "When Dinosaurs Ruled the Earth (Toys Are U.S.)," addresses these issues in an oblique, playful way. Dion has created a child's bedroom chockablock with dinosaur-related paraphernalia: wallpaper, bedding, cookies, a "Jurassic Park" lunchbox, posters, Robert T. Bakker's book "The Dinosaur Heresies," and piles of stuffed animals and plastic toys. A video, "Hollywood Dinosaurs," shows clips from movies like "The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms" and "Valley of Gwangi." This superabundance of products is seductive yet also a little grotesque. Dion suggests that pop culture's fascination with those long-dead creatures serves as a palliative for anxieties about the loss of contemporary species. These innocuous toys may be alluding to future extinctions—perhaps even our own.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"Waist Not," a Costume Institute exhibit, proposes that the waist is the defining element of the fashion silhouette, offering examples from the eighteenth century to the present.... ¶ "The Decorative Arts of Frank Lloyd Wright." Furniture, ceramics, textiles, sculpture, architectural fragments, photographs, stained glass, metalwork, and drawings. (There are concurrent shows of Wright works at the Museum of Modern Art and the Guggenheim Museum.)... ¶ Paintings and drawings from the late eighteenth century to the early twentieth by Caspar David Friedrich and Ferdinand Hodler, among others. Through April 24.... ¶ "The Golden Age of Danish Painting." The Danish efflorescence was relatively brief—from about 1790 to 1850—and it was generated almost entirely by the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen. Although the artists here worked in many genres, portraiture and landscape are the highlights. The dean of Danish painting, Christoffer Wilhelm Eckersburg (1785-1853), excelled in both. His most famous student, Christen Købke (1810-48), is represented by numerous views of Frederiksborg Castle. Through April 24. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)



"Packaging the New" at Cooper-Hewitt.

RICHARD TUSCHMAN

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—"Frank Lloyd Wright: Architect." A retrospective, beginning with material from the eighteen-eighties. (There are concurrent shows of Wright works at the Metropolitan Museum and the Guggenheim Museum.) Through May 10.... ¶ A section of a sixty-foot-diameter dome by Chuck Hoberman, which opens and closes in a fluid motion reminiscent of the expansion and contraction of the iris. Through April 12. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays and Fridays, noon to 8:30.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"Women on the Edge: Twenty Photographers in Europe, 1919-39" includes work by Ilse Bing and Lucia Moholy.... ¶ "Frank Lloyd Wright's Designs for the Guggenheim Museum." (There are concurrent shows of Wright works at the Metropolitan Museum and the Museum of Modern Art.)... ¶ "Robert Morris: The Mind/Body Problem," a retrospective exhibition, explores the intellectual underpinnings of this protean artist through a selection of his sculptures, drawings, and videos from the early sixties to the present. Morris's career touches on many of the important artistic developments of the last thirty years, confounding expectations of aesthetic unity or continuity. Through May 1. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 10 to 6, and Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 8.)

Guggenheim Museum SoHo, 575 Broadway—Eighty watercolors, made between 1911 and 1944, by the Russian artist Wassily Kandinsky (1866-1944). The earlier works, with their nervous, liquescent, quasi-figurative shapes, represent Kandinsky's art at its strongest. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 6, and Saturday evenings until 8.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—"Richard Avedon: Evidence 1944-94." This retrospective includes photographs of Isak Dinesen (1959) and Francis Bacon (1979).... ¶ "Collection in Context: A Year from the Collection Circa 1952." Some seventy-five paintings, sculptures, prints, drawings, and photographs. Through April 17. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—Fine art ("Watson and the Shark," by John Singleton Copley), casts of fossils, and a sample of items that have been found in fishes' bellies—armor, hubcaps, a fur coat—are a few of the items in "Sharks! Fact and Fantasy." There's also a walk-through diorama with lighting and ambient sound that make you think you're underwater. Through May 1.... ¶ "Waura: Drawings of the Waura Indians of Brazil" is an exhibit of illustrations by members of this Amazon tribe, who were encouraged by an anthropologist to put onto paper images they traditionally use in body painting, pottery, basketry, and wood carving. Through April 24. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—Selected works of Leon Polk Smith, an American abstract painter.... ¶ "Fantasy Furniture," an installation of fourteen mostly nineteenth-century pieces.... ¶ "Fancy Feet: Four Centuries of Ladies' Footwear." Through April 15.... ¶ Red Grooms' large-scale sculpture of the Staten Island Ferry arriving in Manhattan graces the museum's lobby.... ¶ From the museum's contemporary-art collection, an exhibit of paintings by Mark Rothko and Ad Reinhardt, and sculpture by Louise Nevelson, among others. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

American Craft Museum, 40 W. 53rd St.—"Uncommon Beauty in Common Objects: The Legacy of African-American Craft Art" reveals African-American craft artists not only as keepers of their culture (sometimes not without political asides) but as prime movers in the field. One of the most commanding, and pointed, pieces is Angela Franklin's "I Never Learned to Tap Dance, My Shoes Go Unworn" (1990). Made of brilliant-colored sgrafitto and cloisonné, it depicts a large, black male puppeteer manipulating the strings of a group of tap dancers. There are also objects of sheer beauty, such as James Watkins' "Painted

Desert" stoneware bowl (1986) and Robert Stull's ceramic "Queen Mother" (1978). (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St.—"Asia/America: Identities in Contemporary Asian-American Art." The society's first exhibit of contemporary art includes paintings, sculptures, and photographs by twenty Asian-American artists, most of whom were born in Asia. Of note is May Sun's "Fugitive Landing," an installation with English-language books about China on one side and, on the other side, a kind of Chinese fish pond cum trellis with wooden foot paths and video images of Sun Yat-sen. Self-portraits of Tseng Kwong Chi in a Mao Tse Tung jacket, posed in front of such American icons as the Statue of Liberty and Mickey Mouse, are startling and funny and serious. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 8; Sundays, noon to 5.)

China Institute, 125 E. 65th St.—Photographs of nineteenth-century China by John Thomson (1837-1921). (Open Mondays through Saturdays, 10 to 5, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—"Packaging the New: Design and the American Consumer 1925-75." A trip down short-term-memory lane, documenting the rise of industrial designers, who became indispensable to the quenching of America's thirst for new products. The pink Formica kitchen display looks like a perky old magazine advertisement come to life. The docents should look like Stepford wives. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Dia Center for the Arts, 548 W. 22nd St.—Exhibits of work by Katharina Fritsch, Dan Graham, and Ann Hamilton. (Open Thursdays through Sundays, noon to 6.) . . . ¶ At 393 West Broadway—Walter De Maria's "The Broken Kilometer" (1979). . . . ¶ At 141 Wooster St.—De Maria's "The New York Earth Room." (Open Wednesdays through Saturdays, noon to 6.)

Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St.—Sèvres porcelain, Limoges enamel, and paintings by Vermeer, Rembrandt, Whistler, and El Greco are all on view in this former residence of Henry Clay Frick (1849-1919). (Open daily, except Mondays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Grolier Club, 47 E. 60th St.—"The Great Tradition of Typography," an exhibit of books from the Updike Collection on Printing. Daniel Berkeley Updike (1867-1946), who founded Boston's Merrymount Press, saw this collection as a resource for printers and graphic designers. Through May 7. (Open daily, except Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St.—"Japan: A Cartographic Vision, European Printed Maps from the Early Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century." Some hundred and fifty maps and related material documenting European exploration and cartographers' notions of the mysterious East. Opens April 8. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 5.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—"A Postcolonial Kinderhood." A bedroom installation by Elaine Reicheck, featuring twelve samplers embroidered with quotations about Jewish identity. (Open Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 11 to 5:45; Tuesdays, 11 to 8.)

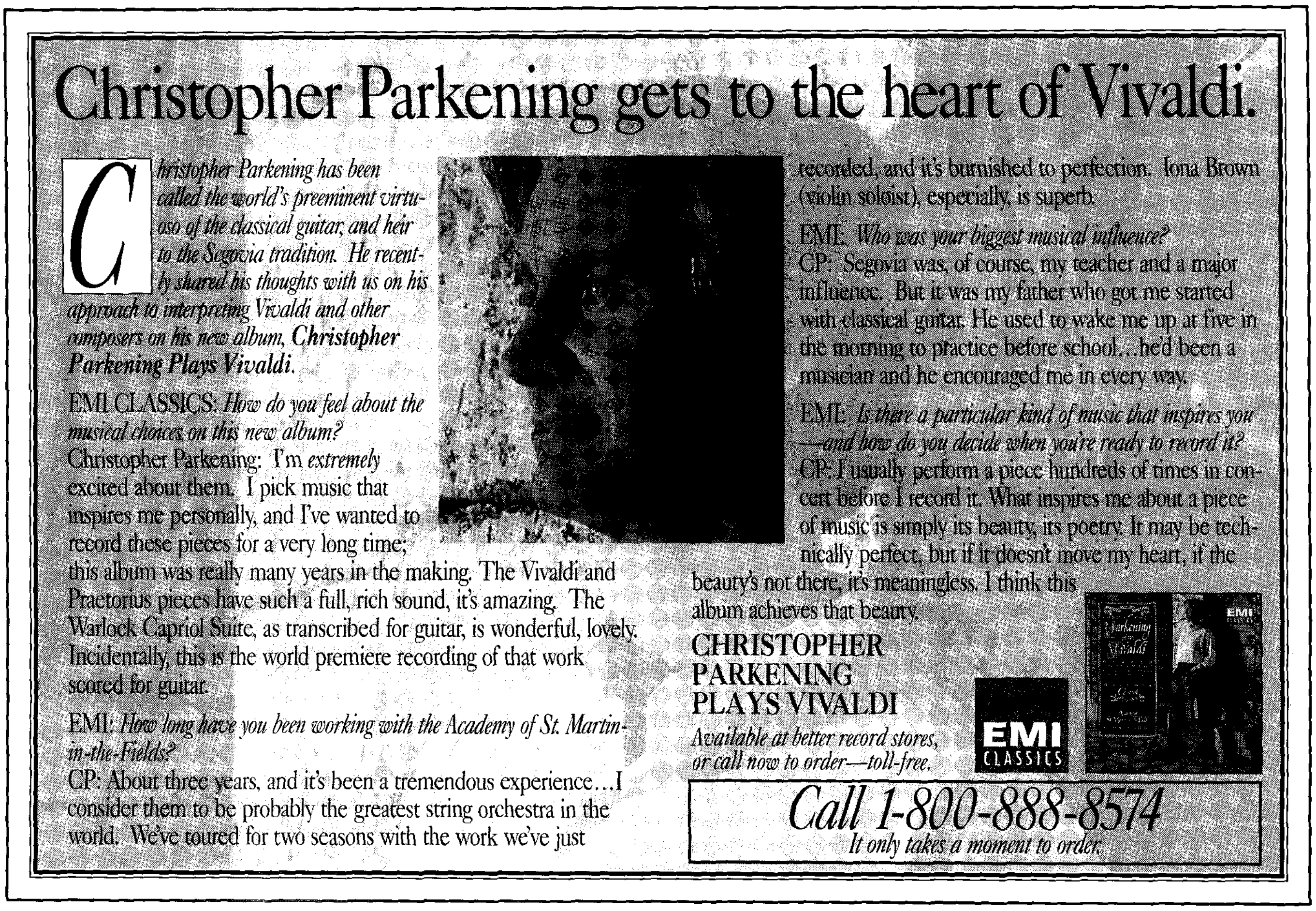
Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—"Gutenberg and the Genesis of Printing" features the library's three Gutenberg Bibles (the largest collection in the world) and a replica of the press on which they were printed. On Saturdays and Sundays at 1, there are demonstrations on the press. Through April 17. . . . ¶ "To Trick the Eye: The Birth of Italian Theatre Design." Through April 10. . . . ¶ "Four Centuries of Stage Design." Through April 10. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10:30 to 5; Saturdays, 10:30 to 6; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Museum for African Art, 593 Broadway—"Outside Museum Walls: African Art in Private Collections." Some forty traditional African art objects, including Bwa masks, beaded dolls, a fly whisk from the Ivory Coast, and a sculpted ram's head from Nigeria. Through April 10. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10:30 to 5:30; Saturdays, noon to 8; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Museum of the City of New York, Fifth Ave. at 104th St.—"Broadway Cavalcade: From the Battery to Harlem" follows the history of New York's diagonal boulevard, from its origins as an Indian footpath to its fame as the Great White Way. . . . ¶ "Historic Glimpses of New York Neighborhoods." Photographs of images found in the museum's collection of New York from the eighteen-hundreds through the Second World War. (Open Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

National Academy of Design, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"The Artist's Eye: Wayne Thiebaud." The painter has selected more than fifty paintings from the Academy's collection. Fifteen of Thiebaud's own pictures will also be on exhibit. Opens April 8. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5; Friday evenings until 8, with no admission charge after 5.)

New Museum, 583 Broadway—"Bad Girls, Part II," the second installation in the museum's irreverent look at gender roles. Yasumasa Morimura's "Portrait (Futago)" best sums up the show: a nude courtesan appropriates the unabashedly direct gaze, sensual pose, coquette's neck band, and slightly dirty hands and feet of Manet's "Olympia," but she's really a man, wearing a cheap blond wig, heavy makeup, salmon nail polish, and one


Christopher Parkening gets to the heart of Vivaldi.

Christopher Parkening has been called the world's preeminent virtuoso of the classical guitar, and heir to the Segovia tradition. He recently shared his thoughts with us on his approach to interpreting Vivaldi and other composers on his new album, ***Christopher Parkening Plays Vivaldi.***

EMI CLASSICS: *How do you feel about the musical choices on this new album?*

Christopher Parkening: I'm *extremely* excited about them. I pick music that inspires me personally, and I've wanted to record these pieces for a very long time; this album was really many years in the making. The Vivaldi and Praetorius pieces have such a full, rich sound, it's amazing. The Warlock Capriol Suite, as transcribed for guitar, is wonderful, lovely. Incidentally, this is the world premiere recording of that work scored for guitar.

EMI: *How long have you been working with the Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields?*

CP: About three years, and it's been a tremendous experience…I consider them to be probably the greatest string orchestra in the world. We've toured for two seasons with the work we've just recorded, and it's burnished to perfection. Iona Brown (violin soloist), especially, is superb.

EMI: *Who was your biggest musical influence?*

CP: Segovia was, of course, my teacher and a major influence. But it was my father who got me started with classical guitar. He used to wake me up at five in the morning to practice before school…he'd been a musician and he encouraged me in every way.

EMI: *Is there a particular kind of music that inspires you—and how do you decide when you're ready to record it?*

CP: I usually perform a piece hundreds of times in concert before I record it. What inspires me about a piece of music is simply its beauty, its poetry. It may be technically perfect, but if it doesn't move my heart, if the beauty's not there, it's meaningless. I think this album achieves that beauty.

CHRISTOPHER PARKENING PLAYS VIVALDI

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ART–Cont'd

hellacious pair of sparkly red mules. Through April 10. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Saturdays, noon to 8.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—"Virginia Woolf and Her Circle" is a quick literary tour of Bloomsbury and environs, focussing on the life of its central figure. Among the approximately two hundred items on display are letters, photographs, portraits, manuscripts, and first editions drawn from the library's Berg Collection, which is the major holder of Woolf's literary work. Through April 9. (Open Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6.)

Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum, 32-37 Vernon Blvd., at 33rd Rd., Long Island City—Home to a comprehensive collection of work by the Japanese-American sculptor. (Open Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—"Elizabeth Catlett: Works on Paper, 1944-1992." Representational prints. Through May 8. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6. The following listings lead off with new shows.)

Frank Auerbach—Close friends of the British artist sat for most of the portraits in this show. Opens April 7. Through April 30. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Jack Bush (1909-77)—Color-field paintings and works on paper from 1938 to 1976. Opens April 7. Through April 30. (Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Ursula von Rydingsvard—Sculptures made of cedar beams. The objects resemble architectural elements, household utensils, and agricultural tools. Opens April 7. Through May 14. (Galerie Lelong, 20 W. 57th St.)

John Wilde—Paintings derived from the artist's forties sketchbooks, with his surreal speculations on physique and gender, fertility and death. Opens April 6. Through April 30. (Schmidt Bingham, 41 E. 57th St.)

20th Anniversary—The gallery's celebration includes work by Philip Guston, Katherine Porter, Martin Puryear, and William Tucker. Opens April 7. Through May 14. (McKee, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

"Counterpoints: American Art 1930-45"—A review of trends of the era, including art by Charles Shaw, Pavel Tchelitchew, and Mark Tobey. Opens April 7. Through June 4. (Rosenfeld, 24 W. 57th St.)

"With the Passage of Time . . ."—An early and a recent work each by William Baziotes, Grace Hartigan, and Milton Resnick, among others. Opens April 7. Through May 27. (Vanderwoude Tananbaum, 24 E. 81st St.)

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Ralph Goings—A retrospective of watercolors from 1972 to 1991 by a Photo-Realist painter fond of an American iconography of roadside diners and pickup trucks. The looser handling implied by the watercolor medium seems at odds with the obsessive precision characteristic of Photo-Realist painting. Goings manages to balance the competing claims. Through April 30. (McCoy, 41 E. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Alex Katz—Landscapes from 1954 to 1956 in a primarily bright palette. With their broad expanses of color and slablike brushstrokes, these paintings clearly hark back to Katz's artistic origins in Abstract Expressionism while pointing forward to the hieratic figural work that would preoccupy him from the late fifties to the present. Through April 16. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

Max Beckmann (1884-1950)—An excellent show of late paintings, sculptures, and works on paper by this renowned German Expressionist. Through May 14. (Werner, 21 E. 67th St.)

Katherine Bowling—Abstract and landscape paintings. Through May 7. (Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St.)

Sue Coe—Large mixed-medium drawings focussing on the artist's experiences at an AIDS ward in Galveston, Texas. Through May 27. (Galerie St. Etienne, 24 W. 57th St.)

Helen Frankenthaler—Recent paintings on paper, by a preëminent Abstract Expressionist. Through April 28. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St.)

Roni Horn—Large (some measuring more than seven feet long) abstract drawings, plus photographic suites of Iceland. Through April 30. (Marks, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

James Hyde—Glass boxes with axle grease, silicone, and oil paint. Through April 16. (Baldacci, 41 E. 57th St.)

Larry Poons / Stephen Hannock—Recent paintings with complex surfaces. The artist builds up a thick undersurface, and then splashes it with buckets of paint. / Luminous paintings, featuring a depiction of the Connecticut River oxbow that has occupied the artist for fifteen years. Through April 30. (Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St.)

Julian Schnabel—A new series of paintings with Masonic banners and cryptic texts. Through April 23. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St.)

Joseph Stella (1877-1946)—Nature-inspired drawings and paintings from throughout the artist's career, in oil, silverpoint, pastel, and watercolor. Through May 27. (York, 21 E. 65th St.)

Bill Traylor (1854-1947)—Watercolors and drawings of figures and animals, by an American folk artist. Through April 28. (Davis & Langdale, 231 E. 60th St.)

"Bloomsbury"—Works by Duncan Grant, Vanessa Bell, Roger Fry, and other members of the celebrated British group. Opens April 1. Through April 28. (Davis & Langdale, 231 E. 60th St.)

"Portraits"—More than sixty portraits, ranging from the mid-eighteenth century to the mid-twentieth, by Benjamin West, Childe Hassam, Philip Guston, and others. Through June 11. (IBM Gallery of Science and Art, Madison Ave. at 56th St.)

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

Manuel Ocampo—"Stations of the Cross," fourteen paintings offering a humorous version of the Catholic ritual. Opens April 6. Through April 30. (Nosei, 100 Prince St.)

Doug and Mike Starn—"Spectroheliographs," a kinetic sculpture, a film, and light boxes exploring the relationship between beliefs in creationism and modern science's explanation of existence. Opens April 9. Through May 7. (Castelli, 420 West Broadway.)

"Drawing Towards a Distant Shore: Selections from Portugal"—Six artists spanning two generations. Opens April 12. Through May 21. (The Drawing Center, 35 Wooster St.)

"Waterworks"—A theme show, with artists ranging from Marsden Hartley to Malcolm Morley. Opens April 9. Through May 7. (Thorp, 103 Prince St.)

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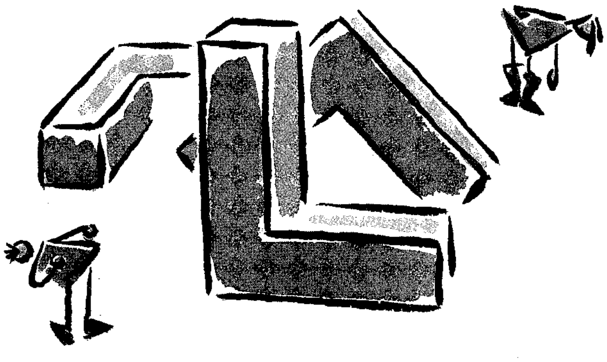
Robert Mangold—Trapezoidal paintings with paired ellipses from the "Plane/Figure Series" by this minimalist painter. Mangold uses a single line to delineate the two ellipses on a double-panelled, shaped canvas, preferring for most of these paintings a subdued palette that still allows for subtle atmospheric effects. Like the best minimal art, Mangold's paintings create a wide range of perceptual effects within a stringently limited vocabulary of forms. Through April 23. (Pace, 142 Greene St.) . . . **note:** Related drawings are on view uptown at Pace, 32 E. 57th St.



Robert Morris at the Guggenheim.

NISHAN AKGULIAN

Emma Amos—Figurative paintings addressing feminist, racial, and cultural-identity issues. Through April 30. (Art in General, 79 Walker St. Opens at noon.)

Sydney Blum / Mark Schwartz—Abstract constructions of felt, hair, and burlap, resembling shelters. / Expressionist canvases with abstract and landscape elements. Through April 30. (Bace, 39 Wooster St.)

William Copley—Cartoonlike paintings and drawings of nymphs and satyrs. Through April 30. (Nolan/Eckman, 560 Broadway.)

Ford Crull—Paintings in oil and wax, fusing symbols, text, and images of the body. Through April 23. (M-13, at 72 Greene St.)

Mark Dion—An installation. Through April 9. (American Fine Arts, 22 Wooster St.)

Michele Harvey—Seventeen misted landscapes whose evocation of nature is at once richly verdant and mysteriously amorphous. Although the subject brings to mind Monet's poplar series, Harvey's soft, shadowy works are full of emotion. In "Encounter," a solitary tree whips like a hurricane across a milky sky. In "Willow Walk" and "Watermark," with their mesmerizing patterns of tree silhouettes, Harvey uses a three-panel composition, framing each segment in dark wood. Through April 16. (Bridgewater/Lustberg, 529 Broadway.)

David Kapp—Expressionistic street scenes of lower Manhattan, where the artist lives. Through April 23. (Beitzel, 102 Prince St.)

Barbara Kruger—Kruger's latest installation addresses aggression and invidiousness. Her words and appropriated images cover the gallery's walls, floor, and ceiling, and she has also provided a strident soundtrack of screaming crowds, a hectoring preacher, and the occasional chorus of "We Are the World." Through April 30. (Boone, 417 West Broadway.)

Richard Long—A slate floor sculpture and a mud wall drawing, plus photographs and text relating to this artist's site-specific works. Through April 23. (Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St.)

Mario Merz—An igloo and an installation by a member of the Arte Povera movement. Through April 23. (Gladstone, 99 Greene St.)

Natalya Nesterova—Small-scale paintings of scenes of daily life, by a Russian artist. Through June 30. (Bromm, 90 West Broadway.)

Cady Noland—A conceptual installation. Through April 23. (Cooper, 155 Wooster St.)

Greg O'Halloran—Using ornate moving parts, electric colors, and campy Heaven and Hell imagery, the artist has created what must be the gaudiest, kitschiest work this side of Las Vegas. Ranging from the pulsing speakers and gilded grenade of "Master Piece" to the black plastic gun aimed at "Shoot the Moon" (a painting), these over-the-top multimedia constructions evoke the video arcade. Through April 30. (Steinbaum Krauss, 132 Greene St.)

Kristin Oppenheim—Photographic images projected on the gallery walls, accompanied by a recording of the artist chanting. Through April 23. (303 Gallery, 89 Greene St.)

Peter Reginato—Seemingly free-floating painted-steel sculptures in bright colors. Through April 30. (395 West Broadway.)

Doris Salcedo—An installation of clothing and furniture, alluding to the forced displacement of individuals and families. Through May 7. (Brooke Alexander, 59 Wooster St.)

Michael Scott—Optical works in enamel on aluminum. Through April 23. (Shafrazi, 119 Wooster St.)

Ronald Searle—Original drawings and

watercolors. Through May 14. (Heineman, 594 Broadway.)

Masami Teraoka—Symbolic figurative watercolors. Through April 20. (Auchincloss, 558 Broadway.)

"The Garden of Sculptural Delights"—An environmental installation by nine artists, inspired by the well-known Hieronymus Bosch painting. Through April 23. (Exit Art, 548 Broadway.)

ANTIQUES

Spring Pier Antiques Show—The annual bazaar for collectors offers everything from furniture, jewelry, and paintings to sports memorabilia and vintage clothes. (Pier 92, Twelfth Ave. at 52nd St. April 9-10, from 10 to 6. Tickets at the door on the days of the show.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Lenswomen

Discoveries abound in "Women on the Edge: Twenty Photographers in Europe, 1910-1939," which was organized by and first shown at the Getty Museum, in California, and is now at the Guggenheim (through June 1). It's a deeply engaging exhibition, but it's also the antidote to the seemingly countless historical surveys in which the women who contributed to this fertile, influential period in European photography have been overlooked. The old pronouncements—that more women would have been included if more examples had been available, or if their pictures had met a certain high standard of quality—turn out, of course, to be based on ignorance.

The variety of intentions (from advertising to art) and the heterogeneity of approaches (from the Bauhaus emphasis on design to portraiture) make for a wide-ranging tour of the era's dynamics, starting with the work of well-known photographers like Florence Henri and Lucia Moholy. Else Thalemann's landscape of the Ruhr River Valley before it was industrialized is powerfully evocative of the place and the time and the psychology of the period; one can almost see the shadow of future events. Ilse Bing's view of the Rue de Valois, in Paris, is a complex composition—among its elements is an enormous puddle reflecting the sky—and a brilliant reconciliation of abstraction and realism. And then there are pages from Irene Bayer's personal photo albums: riveting diaristic images that take the power of snapshots to the *n*th degree.

Arthur Elgort—A behind-the-scenes look at the world of mega-waifs and other lanky goddesses. Through May 7. (Staley-Wise, 560 Broadway.)

"Pioneers of Soviet Photography"—Work by Alexander Rodchenko, Max Alpert, and others. Through April 30. (Schickler, 52 E. 76th St.)

(See the museum listings for photography exhibitions at the Guggenheim Museum, the Whitney Museum, the China Institute, and the Museum of the City of New York.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC

Much at Stake

Arthur Honegger (1892-1955) was odd man out in the Parisian coterie of young composers dubbed "Les Six" by a music critic just after the First World War. Though born in Le Havre, he was a Swiss citizen, and his musical tastes veered as much toward Germany as toward France. While his colleagues in Les Six (Poulenc, Milhaud, Georges Auric, Germaine Tailleferre, and Louis Durey) generally pledged allegiance to Satie's wry asceticism, Honegger openly scorned Satie's music; among the older generation of French composers, he preferred the more expansive complexity of Florent Schmitt. In any case, each of Les Six travelled distinct musical paths as they matured. Honegger's style, susceptible to myriad influences, proved hard to pin down, but his work was always striking in its craftsmanship. "My taste and my effort have always been to write music that would be accessible to the great mass of listeners, and yet sufficiently free of banality to interest the connoisseurs," Honegger wrote in his autobiography.

He certainly stirred "the great mass of listeners" with the 1938 première of his dramatic oratorio "Jeanne d'Arc au Bûcher" ("Joan of Arc at the Stake"). Its text, by the Catholic poet Paul Claudel, pointed up parallels between the travails of France's national heroine and the political turmoil sweeping through Europe at the dawn of the Second World War. Though critical reaction was mixed, the general public was thrilled by its combination of religiosity, patriotism, and grandeur. Its massive scale will be apparent when the New York Philharmonic performs it this week at Avery Fisher Hall, with actress Marthe Keller declaiming the title role, a flock of soloists, and two large choirs—a crowd of some three hundred musicians.

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Alice Tully Hall, 875-5050; for Avery Fisher Hall, 875-5030; for Carnegie Hall and Weill Recital Hall, 247-7800; and for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—**otello,** in a new production, with Renée Fleming, Plácido Domingo, and Sergei Leiferkus; conducted by Valery Gergiev. (April 6 and April 9 at 8.) . . . **il barbiere di siviglia,** with Theodora Hanslowe, Frank Lopardo, Vladimir Chernov, Enzo Dara, and Jan-Hendrik Rootering; Yves Abel. (April 7 at 8.) . . . **elektra,** with Gwyneth Jones, Deborah Voigt, Leonie Rysanek, James King, and Jan-Hendrik Rootering; James Levine. (April 8 and April 11 at 8.) . . . **der fliegende holländer,** with Hildegard Behrens, Klaus Koenig, James Morris, and Jan-Hendrik Rootering; Hermann Michael. (April

PH. MARIO SORRENTI

DOLCE & GABBANA

BERGDORF GOODMAN, NEW YORK
BARNEY'S, NEW YORK

9 at 2.) . . . **Aida**, with Sharon Sweet, Ghena Dimitrova, Lando Bartolini, and Leo Nucci; Samuel Cristler. (April 12 at 8.) (Metropolitan Opera House. The season ends on April 23.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—Kurt Masur conducts Honegger's "Jeanne d'Arc au Bûcher," featuring Marthe Keller in the title role and David Wilson-Johnson as Frère Dominique (both of these being spoken parts), and with vocal soloists Heidi Grant Murphy (soprano), D'Anna Fortunato and Wendy Hoffman (mezzo-sopranos), John Aler (tenor), Nathaniel Watson (baritone), the Westminster Symphonic Choir, and the American Boychoir. The evenings also include Claire Bloom reading a selection of Joan-related texts. (Avery Fisher Hall. April 6-8 at 8.)

RECITALS

Russell Sherman—The pianist performs three intermezzos by Brahms, Beethoven's E-Major Sonata (Op. 109), Bartók's "Out of Doors," and Schumann's C-Major Fantasy. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. April 6 at 8.)

Tokyo String Quartet—Performing quartets by Haydn (in G Minor, Op. 74, No. 3) and Barber, as well as Dvořák's Piano Quintet (with Jeffrey Kahane). (Alice Tully Hall. April 6 at 8.)

Festival Chamber Players—Performing Beethoven's D-Major Serenade (Op. 25), Ravel's Piano Trio, and Schumann's Piano Quartet; with flutist Eugenia Zukerman, violinist Eriko Sato, violist Ira Weller, cellist Ruth Sommers, and pianist David Oei. (Merkin Concert Hall. April 6 at 8.)

Jeffrey Siegel—The pianist performs and talks about music by Fauré, Debussy, Poulenc, and Ravel, with Omus Hirshbein (the 92nd Street Y's departing performing-arts guru) assisting in Ravel's "Mother Goose" Suite (for piano four-hands). (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100. April 6 at 8.)

Bargemusic—Anne-Marie McDermott performs four Scarlatti sonatas; Ronald Thomas joins her for Brahms' E-Minor Cello Sonata; and violinist Juliette Kang completes the ensemble for Shostakovich's Piano Trio (Op. 67). (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. April 7 at 7:30 and April 10 at 4.)

Frederic Chiu—Pianist, performing five of Busoni's Bach transcriptions; Prokofiev's Sonata No. 6; his own transcription of Prokofiev's "Lieutenant Kijé Suite"; and excerpts from Abel Decaux's "Clairs de Lune," Debussy's "Images," and Ravel's "Miroirs." (Alice Tully Hall. April 7 at 8.)

Menahem Pressler—The pianist performs Brahms' "Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Handel." (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. April 8 at 7.)

Murray Perahia—The pianist performs Beethoven's A-Major Sonata (Op. 2, No. 2) and numerous shorter works by Brahms and Chopin. (Carnegie Hall. April 8 at 8.)

David Leisner—Classical guitarist, performing a suite by Pachelbel, Paganini's "Grand Sonata," Villa-Lobos's Four Études, an arrangement of Bach's Unaccompanied Cello Suite No. 3 (with dancers), and a song cycle of his own composition (featuring soprano Juliana Gondek). (Kaye Playhouse, Hunter College, Park Ave. at 68th St. 772-4448. April 8 at 8.)

American Festival of Microtonal Music—Performing a wide-ranging program of music employing non-traditional tuning systems, including the premières of Ivor Darreg's "Lullaby for a Baby Computer" (in thirty-four-tone equal temperament) and Johnny Reinhard's "Rama" (for solo trombone). (St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia University; enter at Broadway and 116th St. April 8 at 8. For information about tickets, call 517-3550.)

Krosnick and Kalish—Cellist Joel Krosnick and pianist Gilbert Kalish continue their biannual series of marathon concerts by offering a doubleheader that traces the Romantic impulse in music. Violinist Joel Smirnoff assists. April 9 at 3: Beethoven's "Archduke" Trio, Hindemith's "Fantasiestücke" (Op. 8), Ralph Shapey's First Cello Sonata, and Brahms' F-Major Sonata. . . . ¶ At 7:30: Busoni's "Kultaselle," Bartók's First Rhapsody, Chopin's "Grand Duo Concertante," and Dvořák's F-Minor Trio. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. A single ticket provides entry to both concerts.)

Meridian String Quartet—April 9 at 5:30: Performing Beethoven's Quartet in E-Flat Major (Op. 74) and (with student musicians assisting) Mendelssohn's Octet and a new work by Bruce Adolphe. (Weill Recital Hall.) . . . ¶ April 12 at 7:30: Presenting Schubert's A-Minor Quartet (Op. 29, No. 1) in an informal concert. (Turtle Bay Music School, 244 E. 52nd St. 753-8811.)

"The True Story of Rumpelstiltskin" at the Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre.

GAIL DOUGAN

Continuum—Presenting chamber music by György Kurtág. (Alice Tully Hall. April 9 at 7.)

Guarneri Quartet—Members of the foursome anchor a program that comprises Beethoven's D-Major Trio (Op. 8), Mendelssohn's F-Minor String Quartet, and Dvořák's A-Major String Sextet. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. April 9 at 8.)

Mendelssohn String Quartet—Performing the string quartets of Schumann and Brahms, in a pair of concerts. The first installment covers Schumann's Quartet in F Major (Op. 41, No. 2) and Brahms' Quartets in A Minor (Op. 51, No. 2) and C Minor (Op. 51, No. 1). (Merkin Concert Hall. April 9 at 8:30. The series concludes on April 13.)

Morning Baroque—Baroque violinist Linda Quan, viola da gambist Martha McGaughey, and harpsichordist Arthur Haas perform sonatas by Buxtehude, Telemann, and Corelli. (Le Refuge Inn, 620 City Island Ave., City Island, the Bronx. April 10 at 11 A.M. Admission is free, but call 1-718 885-2478 to reserve a seat.)

Western Wind—The vocal sextet offers works from seven centuries. (Kaye Playhouse, Hunter College, Park Ave. at 68th St. 772-4448. April 10 at 3.)

Christina Sunnerstam and Harry Huff—The violinist and the organist perform works by Handel, Chausson, Korngold, and others. (Calvary Church, Park Ave. at 21st St. 473-1216. April 10 at 4.)

Bridgehampton Chamber Music—Performing Duruflé's "Prelude, Recitative, and Variations," Edgar Meyer's Trio No. 1, and Schubert's "Trout" Quintet. (Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St. 750-5776. April 10 at 5.)

String Trios—Violinist Jacob Rubinstein, violist Beatrice Muthelet, and cellist Iris Regev play trios by Beethoven and Schubert. (Hotel Wales, Madison Ave. at 92nd St. April 10 at 6 and 8. Admission is free, but call 876-6000 to reserve a seat.)

Bang on a Can All-Stars—Avant-garde champs perform works by Louis Andriessen, Steve Reich, Giacinto Scelsi, Frederic Rzewski, Hermeto Pascoal, and Julia Wolfe. (Walter Reade Theatre, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level. April 11 at 7:30. For information about tickets, call 875-5050.)

Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music Ensembles—Opening concerts of a mini-festival at Merkin Concert Hall. April 12 at 2: Schubert's C-Major String Quintet and A-Major Piano Quintet (the "Trout"), with performers including pianist James Tocco and the Amernet String Quartet. . . . ¶ April 12 at 8: The Percussion Group plays works by Takemitsu, Cage, Jahn Beukes, Jonathan Kramer, and John Luther Adams.

Prairie Sights and Sounds—A consideration of Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie style and parallel musical trends. Terence Riley will lecture on architectural history, and the Perspectives Ensemble will perform works by Harris (his Concerto for Piano, Clarinet, and String Quartet), Copland (a chamber version of "Appalachian Spring"), and others. (St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia University; enter at Broadway and 116th St. April 12 at 7:30. For information about tickets, call 854-1540.)

FOR KIDS

(A list of activities for children and their parents or other adults.)

"The True Story of Rumpelstiltskin"—A marionette production of the German folktale. (Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre, Central Park near W. 81st St. Tuesdays through Fridays at 10:30 and noon, and Saturdays at noon and 3. For reservations, which are required, call 988-9093.)

Funnies—Jules Feiffer will talk about his life as a boy cartoonist and will demonstrate how a comic strip is constructed. Recommended ages: eight to thirteen. (Donnell Library Center, 20 W. 53rd St. April 9 at 2:30. No tickets necessary.)

Lonely Goatherds—Ruth Fuglistaller will unlock the secrets to yodelling, at a workshop on vocal tricks. (Lefferts Homestead Children's Museum, Flatbush Ave. near Empire Blvd., Prospect Park, Brooklyn. April 10 at 2. No tickets necessary.)

Read to Me—William Wegman will read from his new book, "ABC," and Hudson Talbott from his own works "We're Back: A Dinosaur's Story" and "Your Pet Dinosaur." (The Drawing Center, 33 Wooster St. April 10 at 3. No tickets necessary.)

Keep in Mind—The Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus at Madison Square Garden. (465-6000. Through May 1.) . . . ¶ The Radio City Easter Show, with the Rockettes. (Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777. Through April 10.) . . . ¶ The Famous People Players, a Canadian troupe of puppeteers, in "A Little More Magic." (Belasco Theatre, 111 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Through April 10.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

April in Poland—As part of the New York Public Library's monthlong festival of Polish arts, there will be Polish television and radio programming, concerts, the New York première of the dance "Satan in Goray," a pantomime performance by Rajmund Klechot, and a screening of "The Silent Touch," a film by Krzysztof Zanussi, at which the director will be present. (Bruno Walter Auditorium, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Lincoln Center. 870-1630. Through April 30.)

Radio Nights—Garrison Keillor brings the troops to Town Hall. Joining him for the April 9 broadcast, at 5:45, will be John Sebastian and the J Band, pianist Johnnie Johnson, and humorist Roy Blount, Jr. (123 W. 43rd St. For tickets, call 307-7171.)

Spring Has Sprung—The daffodils and forsythia should be in bloom at the New York Botanical Garden, and on April 9-10, from 11 to 4, the gardening season begins in earnest, with tree-climbing and pruning demonstrations and discussions about lawns and basic garden design. (Bronx Park. Admission by contribution.)

Everybody Swing!—Workshops, contests, and dances are all part of the American Swing Dance Championships, on April 7-10. You could polish up your moves in a morning workshop, take third place in the Lindy contest that afternoon, and then impress your friends at the Hotel Pennsylvania in the evening. Or you could watch the experts do the Shag and the Balboa. (For registration and schedule information, call 260-2033.)

Hot-Button Topics—A political-science conference at the City University of New York on April 8 will include two free discussions. At 9 A.M.: "What is Ethical Feminism?," with Drucilla Cornell. . . . At 5:15: Manning Marable and Cornel West will talk about the theme of the conference "Contemporary Political Conflict: Gender, Race, Ethnicity, and Religion." (City University Graduate Center Auditorium, 33 W. 42nd St. For conference information, call 391-2030.) . . . ¶ April 12 at 8: Breyten Breytenbach, Stanley Crouch, Joy Harjo, Edward W. Said, and Tatyana Tolstaya will participate in a PEN panel discussion about writing and activism. (Vanderbilt Hall, New York University, 40 Washington Square S., at Macdougal St. No tickets necessary.)

All This, and Dinosaurs Too—A few offerings from the American Museum of Natural History. April 6 at 7: Robert Farris Thompson will talk about how African traditions from the Congo have influenced contemporary American visual arts. . . . April 7 at 7: "Evolution Follies: A Darwinian Entertainment," wherein creationists and Darwinians offer their points of view in song. . . . April 9-10, from 1 to 4:30: The Colorado Sisters will tell folk tales and discuss current events in Mexico. . . . April 10 at 2 and 4: Li Lian Xing will talk about Chinese medicinal herbs and diagnostic techniques, and two Chinese chefs will demonstrate their award-winning vegetable-carving skills. (Central Park W. at 79th St. 769-5310.)

Readings—April 6 at 7: Robert Hass and Czeslaw Milosz will read from their own poetry. (Poetry Society of America, 15 Gramercy Park S. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.) . . . ¶ April 7 at 7:30: Carlos Fuentes will read from his collection of novellas, "The Orange Tree." (Books & Co., 939 Madison Ave., at 74th St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ April 7 at 8: Joy Harjo and Donna Masini will read from their own poetry. (Barnard Hall, Barnard College, Broadway at 117th St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ April 8 at 6: Seamus Heaney will read from his own poetry. (Schimmel Auditorium, Tisch Hall, New York University, 40 W. 4th St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ April 11 at 7:30: Rick Moody and Jane Shapiro will read from their own fiction. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 645-5848.)

SPORTS

Golden Boys—With two months of elimination bouts all wrapped up, the finalists in the Daily News Golden Gloves amateur boxing championship will contend for titles in both the novice and open divisions. It was here that Jake La Motta dreamed he could be a contender, and Sugar Ray Robinson and Riddick Bowe also emerged from this tournament, which dates back to 1927. Fighting this year in the 132-pound category will be eighteen-year-old Jonathan Toliaferro and twenty-two-year-old Brian Adams, both potential Olympians. Adams, the Golden Gloves returning champion, was beaten in a local national-championship boxoff last year by Toliaferro, who was subsequently disqualifed from the nationals for holding. To your corners. (Paramount, Madison Square Garden. April 7-8 at 7. For tickets, call 307-7171.)

HOME TEAMS

(The Knicks and the Rangers play at Madison Square Garden, 465-6000; the Nets and the Devils at the Meadowlands Arena, 1-201 935-3900; the Islanders at the Nassau Coliseum, 1-516 794-9300; the Yankees at Yankee Stadium, 1-718 293-6000; and the Mets at Shea Stadium, 1-718 507-8499.)

Knicks—Vs. the Cleveland Cavaliers, April 7 at 7:30. . . . ¶ Vs. the Orlando Magic, April 11 at 8.

Nets—Vs. the Atlanta Hawks, April 7 at 7:30. . . . ¶ Vs. the Knicks, April 10 at 1.

Rangers—Vs. the Toronto Maple Leafs, April 8. . . . ¶ Vs. the Buffalo Sabres, April 12. (Game time, 7:30.)

Islanders—Vs. the Dallas Stars, April 8 at 7:40. . . . ¶ Vs. the Rangers, April 10 at 1:10.

Devils—Vs. the Pittsburgh Penguins, April 8 at 7:35.

Yankees—Vs. the Texas Rangers, April 6 at 1. . . . ¶ Vs. the Detroit Tigers, April 8 at 7:05, and April 9-10 at 1:35.

Mets—Vs. the Chicago Cubs, April 11 at 1:40.

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THE MOVIES

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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN "MOVIES IN BRIEF," STARTING ON PAGE 32.

EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)
Theatre 1: "Naked" (directed by Mike Leigh).
Theatre 2: "Suture" (Scott McGehee and David Siegal).
Theatre 3: "Cronos" (Guillermo del Toro, in English and Spanish).
Theatre 4: "Savage Nights" (Cyril Collard, in French), with Collard.
Theatre 5: "Sirens" (John Duigan).
Theatre 6: "The House of the Spirits" (Bille August).

Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. *(598-7171)*
"It's Happening Tomorrow" (Daniele Luchetti, in Italian).

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Hans Christian Andersen's Thumbelina" (Don Bluth) and "Romeo Is Bleeding" (Peter Medak).
Theatre 2: "Guarding Tess" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Remains of the Day" (James Ivory).

Village Theatre VII, 3rd Ave. at 11th. (982-0400)
Theatre 1: Through April 7: "Four Weddings and a Funeral" (Mike Newell). From April 8: "Threesome" (Andrew Fleming).
Theatre 2: "The Hudsucker Proxy" (†).
Theatre 3: "Philadelphia" (†).
Theatre 4: "Jimmy Hollywood" (†).
Theatre 5: "Naked Gun 33⅓: The Final Insult" (†).
Theatre 6: "Major League II" (David S. Ward).
Theatre 7: "Above the Rim" (Jeff Pollack).

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through April 7: "Raining Stones" (Ken Loach).
From April 8: "Red Rock West" (John Dahl).

Village East Cinemas, 2nd Ave. at 12th. (529-6799)
Theatre 1: "Belle Époque" (†).
Theatre 2: "Monkey Trouble" (Franco Amurri).
Theatre 3: "Clifford" (Paul Flaherty).
Theatre 4: "D2: The Mighty Ducks" (Sam Weisman).
Theatre 5: "What's Eating Gilbert Grape" (Lasse Hallström).
Theatre 6: "The Ref" (Ted Demme).
Theatre 7: "The Snapper" (Stephen Frears).

19th Street East 6, B'way at 19th. (260-8000)
Theatre 1: "Four Weddings and a Funeral" (Mike Newell).
Theatre 2: "Philadelphia" (†).
Theatre 3: "Above the Rim" (Jeff Pollack).
Theatre 4: "Major League II" (David S. Ward).
Theatre 5: "Naked Gun 33⅓: The Final Insult" (†).
Theatre 6: "D2: The Mighty Ducks" (Sam Weisman).

Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)
Theatre 1: "Above the Rim" (Jeff Pollack).
Theatre 2: "The Remains of the Day" (James Ivory).
Theatre 3: "Guarding Tess" (†).
Theatre 4: "Hans Christian Andersen's Thumbelina" (Don Bluth) and "Six Degrees of Separation" (Fred Schepisi).

34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Naked Gun 33⅓: The Final Insult" (†).
Theatre 2: Through April 7: "The Piano" (†). From April 8: "Threesome" (Andrew Fleming).
Theatre 3: "Jimmy Hollywood" (†).

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Clifford" (Paul Flaherty).

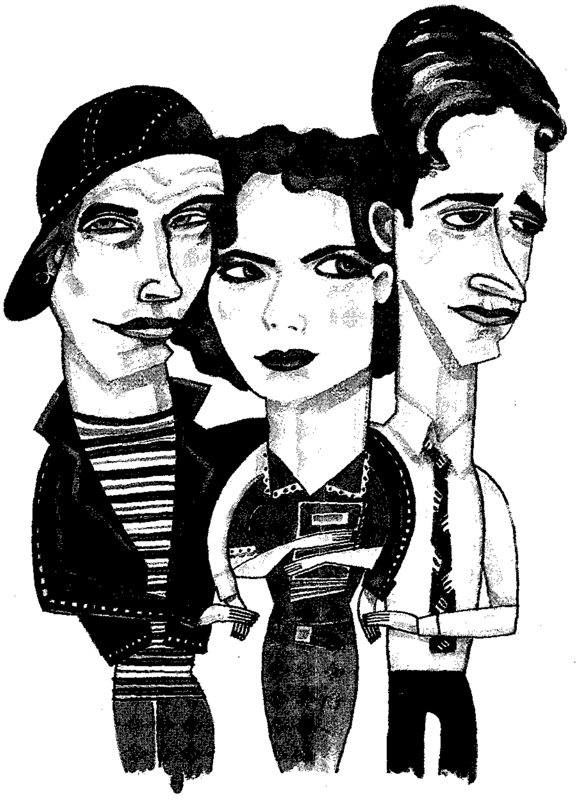
Eastside Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Belle Époque" (†).

Sutton I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Theatre 1: "D2: The Mighty Ducks" (Sam Weisman).
Theatre 2: "Monkey Trouble" (Franco Amurri) and "The Ref" (Ted Demme).

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Mrs. Doubtfire" (Chris Columbus).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"Midnight Cowboy" (1969, John Schlesinger).

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "Above the Rim" (Jeff Pollack).
Theatre 2: Through April 7: "Clifford" (Paul Flaherty). From April 8: "Leprechaun 2" (Rodman Flender).



Opening April 8, Stephen Baldwin, Lara Flynn Boyle, and Josh Charles in "Threesome."

JERRY MACDONALD

59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Six Degrees of Separation" (Fred Schepisi).

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Jimmy Hollywood" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Paper" (†).

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: "The House of the Spirits" (Bille August).
Theatre 2: "Hans Christian Andersen's Thumbelina" (Don Bluth).
Theatre 3: "Bitter Moon" (†).

First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd. (752-4600)
Theatre 1: "In the Name of the Father" (†).
Theatre 2: "Schindler's List" (†).
Theatre 3: "Schindler's List" (†).
Theatre 4: "Reality Bites" (†).
Theatre 5: "In the Name of the Father" (†).
Theatre 6: "The Piano" (†).

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Major League II" (David S. Ward).
Theatre 2: Through April 7: "Philadelphia" (†). From April 8: "Threesome" (Andrew Fleming).

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Guarding Tess" (†).

New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "Four Weddings and a Funeral" (Mike Newell).
Theatre 2: "Naked Gun 33⅓: The Final Insult" (†).

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"Sirens" (John Duigan).

Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"The Hudsucker Proxy" (†).

East 85th Street, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Naked Gun 33⅓: The Final Insult" (†).

Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)
Theatre 1: "The Paper" (†).
Theatre 2: "Above the Rim" (Jeff Pollack).

Orpheum VII, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (876-2400)
Theatre 1: Through April 7: "Clifford" (Paul Flaherty). From April 8: "Leprechaun 2" (Rodman Flender).
Theatre 2: Through April 7: "Guarding Tess" (†). From April 8: "Threesome" (Andrew Fleming).
Theatre 3: "Reality Bites" (†).
Theatre 4: "The House of the Spirits" (Bille August).
Theatre 5: "Hans Christian Andersen's Thumbelina" (Don Bluth), an animated film.
Theatre 6: "Jimmy Hollywood" (†).
Theatre 7: "Major League II" (David S. Ward).

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "D2: The Mighty Ducks" (Sam Weisman).
Theatre 2: "The Ref" (Ted Demme).

WEST SIDE

Film Forum, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Theatre 1: "Zero Patience" (directed by John Greyson).
Theatre 2: See listings under Revival Houses.
Theatre 3: "The Wonderful, Horrible Life of Leni Riefenstahl" (†).

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "In the Name of the Father" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Paper" (†).

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Reality Bites" (†).
Theatre 2: "Schindler's List" (†).

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Midnight Edition" (Howard Libov).
Theatre 2: "The Piano" (†).
Theatre 3: "Bitter Moon" (†).
Theatre 4: "Farewell My Concubine" (Chen Kaige, in Mandarin).

Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)
Theatre 1: "The House of the Spirits" (Bille August.
Theatre 2: "The Paper" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Paper" (†).
Theatre 4: "Schindler's List" (†).
Theatre 5: "The Hudsucker Proxy" (†).
Theatre 6: "Jimmy Hollywood" (†).
Theatre 7: "Schindler's List" (†)
Theatre 8: Through April 7: "The Ref" (Ted Demme). From April 8: "Threesome" (Andrew Fleming).
Theatre 9: "In the Name of the Father" (†).

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— *The New York Observer*

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RANDOM HOUSE

MOVIE HOUSES-Cont’d

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: “Hans Christian Andersen’s Thumbelina” (Don Bluth) and “Ace Ventura: Pet Detective” (Tom Shadyac).
Theatre 2: Through April 7: “Clifford” (Paul Flaherty). From April 8: “Leprechaun 2” (Rodman Flender).
Theatre 3: “Reality Bites” (†).

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
“Jimmy Hollywood” (†).

Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)
Theatre 1: “The Fugitive” (Andrew Davis).
Theatre 2: “Grumpy Old Men” (Donald Petrie).
Theatre 3: “Jurassic Park” (Steven Spielberg).
Theatre 4: “The Pelican Brief” (Alan J. Pakula).
Theatre 5: “My Girl 2” (Howard Zieff).
Theatre 6: “Blink” (Michael Apted).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
“The Paper” (†).

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
“The Remains of the Day” (James Ivory).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
“Under One Roof” (Paulo Thiago, in Portuguese).

Carnegie Hall Cinemas, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
Theatre 1: “The House of the Spirits” (Bille August).
Theatre 2: “Like Water for Chocolate” (Alfonso Arau, in Spanish).

Angelika 57, 225 W. 57th. (586-1900)
“Cronos” (Guillermo del Toro, in English and Spanish).

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (980-5656)
“Germinal” (†).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
“Shadowlands” (Richard Attenborough).

Columbus Circle, B’way at 61st. (247-5070)
“Four Weddings and a Funeral” (Mike Newell).

62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)
“Reality Bites” (†).

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, B’way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: “A Tale of Winter” (†).
Theatre 2: “Fiorile” (†).
Theatre 3: “Ivan and Abraham” (Yolande Zauberman, in Yiddish).
Theatre 4: “The Piano” (†).
Theatre 5: Through April 7: “The Snapper” (Stephen Frears). From April 8: “The Blue Kite” (Tian Zhuangzhuang, in Mandarin).
Theatre 6: “Belle Époque” (†).

Regency, B’way at 67th. (724-3700)
“Schindler’s List” (†).

84th Street Sixplex, B’way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: “Naked Gun 33⅓: The Final Insult” (†).
Theatre 2: “Major League II” (David S. Ward).
Theatre 3: “Guarding Tess” (†).
Theatre 4: “The Hudsucker Proxy” (†).
Theatre 5: “Jimmy Hollywood” (†).
Theatre 6: Through April 7: “The Ref” (Ted Demme). From April 8: “Threesome” (Andrew Fleming).

Thalia, B’way at 95th. (316-4962)
“Bitter Moon” (†).

Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B’way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: “Clifford” (Paul Flaherty).
Theatre 2: “D2: The Mighty Ducks” (Sam Weisman).

Olympia I and II, B’way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: “Above the Rim” (Jeff Pollack).
Theatre 2: “Monkey Trouble” (Franco Amurri) and “Above the Rim.”

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B’way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: “Monkey Trouble” (directed by Franco Amurri) and “Guarding Tess” (†).
Theatre 2: “Above the Rim” (Jeff Pollack).
Theatre 3: Through April 7: “Above the Rim.” From April 8: “Threesome” (Andrew Fleming).
Theatre 4: “On Deadly Ground” (Steven Seagal).
Theatre 5: “Major League II” (David S. Ward).
Theatre 6: “Hans Christian Andersen’s Thumbelina” (Don Bluth) and “Ace Ventura: Pet Detective” (Tom Shadyac).
Theatre 7: “Philadelphia” (†).

Embassy I, B’way at 46th. (302-0494)
“D2: The Mighty Ducks” (Sam Weisman).

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 1: “Clifford” (Paul Flaherty).
Theatre 2: “The Ref” (Ted Demme).
Theatre 3: “Blank Check” (Rupert Wainwright) and “Angie” (Martha Coolidge).

Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B’way. (869-8340)
“Naked Gun 33⅓: The Final Insult” (†).

National Twin, B’way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: Through April 7: “Mother’s Boy” (Yves Simoneau). From April 8: “Leprechaun 2” (Rodman Flender).
Theatre 2: “Sugar Hill” (Leon Ichaso).

REVIVAL HOUSES

Film Forum 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
April 6: “The Devils” (1971, directed by Ken Russell).
April 7: “The Garden” (1990, Derek Jarman).
From April 8: “Blue” (1993, Derek Jarman).

At the American Museum of the Moving Image, Wallace Beery and Joan Crawford in “Grand Hotel.”

KOBAL COLLECTION

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
April 6: “Early Summer” (1951, Yasujiro Ozu; in Japanese) and “There Was a Father” (1942, Ozu; in Japanese).
April 7: “Camille” (1937, George Cukor) and “Queen Christina” (1934, Rouben Mamoulian).
April 8-9: “Taxi Driver” (1976, Martin Scorsese) and “Raging Bull” (1980, Scorsese).
April 10: “Band of Outsiders” (1964, Jean-Luc Godard; in French) and “Breathless” (1959, Godard; in French).
April 11: “Carnival in Flanders” (1936, Jacques Feyder; in French) and “Toni” (1935, Jean Renoir; in French).
April 12: “Charade” (1963, Stanley Donen) and “Arabesque” (1966, Donen).

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—A program of films produced by Gaumont, the French movie studio. April 7 at 2:30 and April 11 at 5: “Don Giovanni” (1979, directed by Joseph Losey; in Italian).... April 7 at 6: “Querelle” (1982, Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German).... April 7 at 8: “La Chèvre” (1981, Francis Veber).... April 8 at 2:30 and April 10 at 5: “La Femme Nikita” (1991, Luc Besson).... April 8 at 6 and April 11 at 1: “Parsifal” (1982, Hans Jürgen Syberberg; in German).... April 9 at 1: “A Nos Amours” (1984, Maurice Pialat).... April 9 at 3:15: “Police” (1986, Pialat).... April 9 at 5:30: “Bizet’s Carmen” (1984, Francesco Rosi).... April 10 at 2: “La Boum” (1980, Claude Pinoteau).... April 12 at 2: “Betty Blue” (1986, Jean-Jacques Beineix).... April 12 at 5: “La Nuit de Varennes” (1981, Ettore Scola).... ¶ A program of films directed by Alexander Mackendrick. April 8 at 3 and April 10 at 5: “The Ladykillers” (†).... April 8 at 6:30: “Sammy Going South” (1963).... April 9 at 2:30 and April 11 at 3: “The Man in the White Suit” (1951).... April 9 at 5: “Tight Little Island” (1949).... April 10 at 2:30: “Mandy” (1952).... ¶ April 7 at 3 and 6: “Eichmann: The Nazi Fugitive” (1993, Ron Frank and Don Setton), a documentary.... ¶ April 11 at 6:30: A program of films by Henry Hills, who will be present.

Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level. (875-5600)—A program of films directed by Robert Aldrich. April 6 at 2 and 8:15: “Twilight’s Last Gleaming” (1977).... April 7 at 2 and 6:30 and April 8 at 4:14: “The Choirboys” (†).... April 7 at 4:15 and 8:50 and April 8 at 2: “All the Marbles” (1981).... ¶ A program of films from Africa. April 8 at 6:30, April 9 at 6, and April 12 at 2: “More Time” (1993, Isaac Mabhikwa).... April 8 at 9, April 9 at 4 and 8:10, and April 12 at 4: “In the Name of Christ” (1993, Roger Gnoan M’bala).... April 9 at 10:10 and April 10 at 4 and 8:45: “Ama” (1990, Kwesi Owusu and Kwate Nee-Owoo).... April 10 at 6:30: “Sababu” (1992, Nissy Joanny Traoré).... ¶ April 9-10 at 2: “Sirga” (1993, Patrick Grandperret; in French).

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)—A retrospective of films starring Joan Crawford. April 9 at 2: “Paid” (1931, Sam Wood).... ¶ April 9 at 4: “Rain” (1932, Lewis Milestone).... ¶ April 10 at 2: “Grand Hotel” (1932, Edmund Goulding).... ¶ April 10 at 4:30: “Chained” (†).

Symphony Space, B’way at 95th St. (864-5400)—A series of films made by American independent filmmakers. April 12 at 7: “Drugstore Cowboy” (1989, Gus Van Sant).... ¶ April 12 at 9: “My Own Private Idaho” (1991, Van Sant).

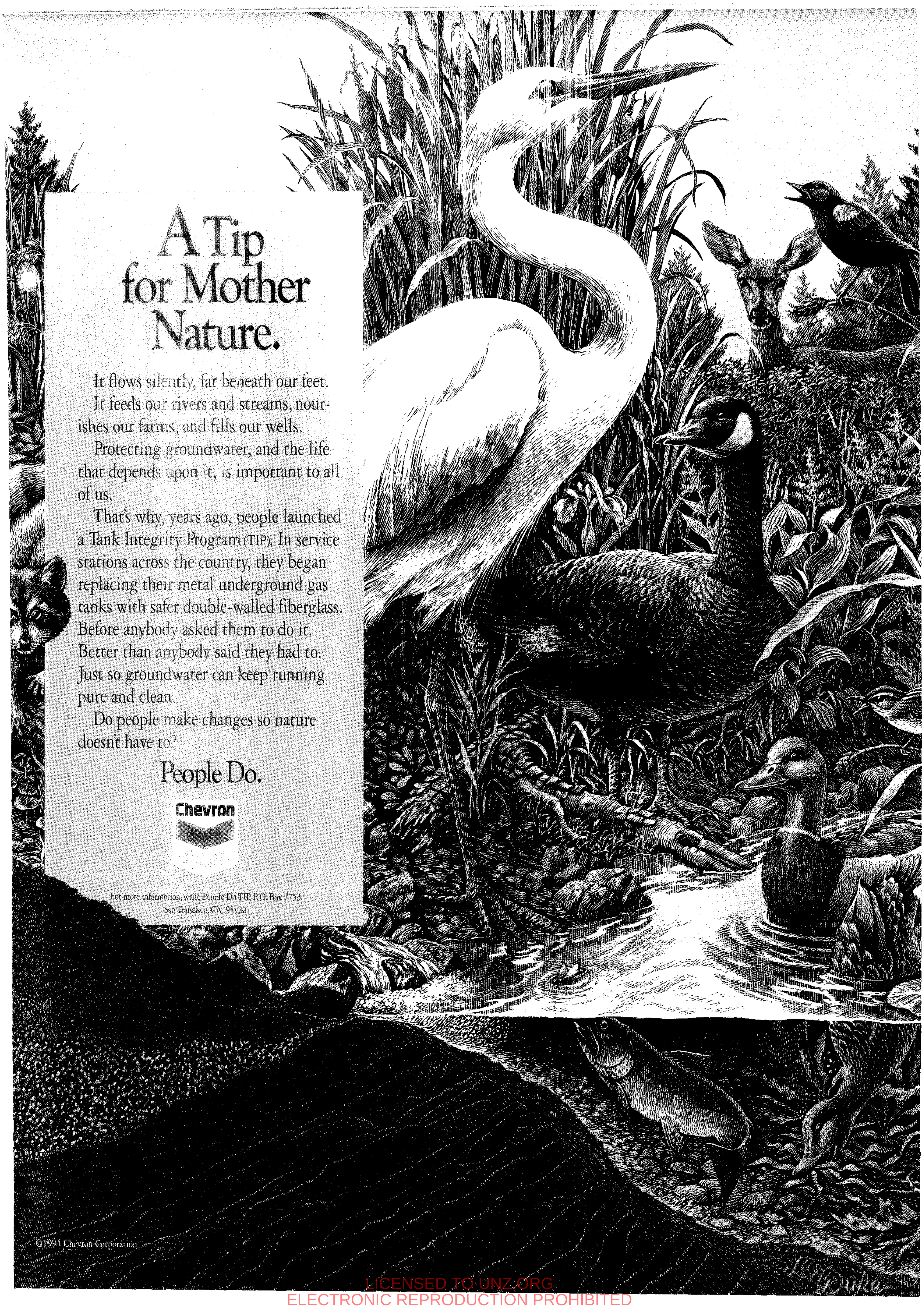
Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5181)—April 6 at 7 and 9: “The Exiles” (1989, Richard Kaplan).... ¶ April 7 at 7 and 9: A program of films by Jonas Mekas.... ¶ April 8 at 7, April 9 at 6 and 8, and April 10 at 7 and 9: Five different programs of films originally shown at Cinema 16.... ¶ April 9 at 4: “Bill Monroe: The Father of Bluegrass Music” (1993, Steve Gebhardt).... ¶ April 9 at 10 and April 10 at 2: “Memories of Duke” (1994, Gary Keys), a documentary on Duke Ellington.... ¶ April 10 at 4: “Saturday Night, Sunday Morning” (1994, Louis Guida).

Whitney Museum, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—A program of films by Andy Warhol. Call for schedule and screening times.

Brooklyn Museum, 200 Eastern Parkway. (1-718 638-5000)—A program called “Hollywood and the French New Wave.” April 9 at 12:30: “The Woman in the Window” (1944, Fritz Lang) and “My Night at Maud’s” (1970, Eric Rohmer; in French).... ¶ April 10 at 12:30: “Hiroshima, Mon Amour” (1959, Alain Resnais; in French) and “The Pawnbroker” (1965, Sidney Lumet).

Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—April 6 at 12:30 and 7:30: “Children of Paradise” (1945, Marcel Carné; in French).... ¶ April 6 at 6: “Jean-Louis Barrault: A Man of the Theatre” (1984, Muriel Balash).

Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St. (517-2742)—April 6-10: “Asian Encounters: Recent Works by Asian-American and British-Asian Filmmakers.”



A Tip for Mother Nature.

It flows silently, far beneath our feet. It feeds our rivers and streams, nourishes our farms, and fills our wells.

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MOVIES IN BRIEF

FILMS OPENING THIS WEEK

THE BLUE KITE—Tian Zhuangzhuang's tale of family life and politics in China from the early fifties to the Cultural Revolution follows the experiences of a woman, her three husbands, and her son. With Lu Liping. In Mandarin. Opening April 8.

LEPRECHAUN 2—In search of a mate, the little green monster (Warwick Davis) sets his sights on a Southern California teen-ager, in this sequel to the 1993 horror feature. Directed by Rodman Flender. Opening April 8.

RED ROCK WEST—Noir in the American West: a drifter (Nicolas Cage) wanders into a Wyoming bar, and the proprietor (J. T. Walsh) mistakes him for the hit man he has hired to knock off his wife (Lara Flynn Boyle). With Dennis Hopper as the real assassin. Directed by John Dahl. Opening April 8.

THREESOME—When a U.C.L.A. student named Alex finds herself mistakenly assigned to a dorm suite with two male roommates—one of them unequivocally heterosexual, the other not so sure—the stage is set for a comic and erotic roundelay. With Lara Flynn Boyle, Stephen Baldwin, and Josh Charles. Written and directed by Andrew Fleming. Opening April 8.

CURRENT FILMS

(The following notes are by Anthony Lane, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow. If a movie has been reviewed in The Current Cinema, the date of its review is given.)

BELLE ÉPOQUE—An aging eccentric painter (Fernando Fernán Gómez) chatters about the chaos of thirties Spain from the vantage of his rural home; a murder and two suicides frame his story. But it's still frivolous art-house kitsch—a roll-in-the-hay comedy that convulses the gelato-and-cappuccino crowd every time a naïve young deserter (Jorge Sanz) succumbs to one of the artist's four attractive daughters (Miriam Dìaz-Aroca, Maribel Verdú, Ariadna Gil, and Penélope Cruz). Accepting this year's Academy Award for Best Foreign Film, the director, Fernando Trueba, paid tribute to Billy Wilder. Apart from a drag scene in which Sanz resembles Tony Curtis and dances a tango with Gil the way Jack Lemmon did with Joe E. Brown, this is no "Some Like It Hot." The movie lacks invention and surprise and, in the end, is even morally conventional. In Spanish.—M.S. (Village East Cinemas, Eastside Playhouse, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

BITTER MOON—With Peter Coyote, Emmanuelle Seigner, Hugh Grant, and Kristin Scott-Thomas, directed by Roman Polanski. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Cinema 3rd Avenue, Quad Cinema, and Thalia.)

FIORILE—The new movie by Paolo and Vittorio Taviani is a family saga that, according to the filmmakers, is based on legends they heard while they were growing up in Tuscany. The picture, spanning two hundred years, tells the story of the Benedettis (who are sometimes referred to by the locals as the Maledettis). The Benedettis begin as peasants and become wealthy landowners, but their prosperity and power derive from an original sin, committed in the seventeen-nineties, for which future generations have never received full absolution. The screenplay, by the Tavianis and Sandro Petraglia, is constructed as a series of historical tales framed by a contemporary story in which members of the three surviving generations of the Benedettis illustrate, in various ways, the consequences of their blighted family history. Although the movie is elegantly made and has moments of great beauty, it somehow falls short of delivering the tremendous emotional impact that it promises. The three legends we're told about the family aren't extraordinary in themselves, and the thematic structure—the whole saga comes down to a parable about love versus greed—is disappointingly banal. In Italian.—T.R. (Reviewed in our issue of 2/7/94.) (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

GERMINAL—Claude Berri's latest epic, adapted from Zola, is set in nineteenth-century France, a lot of it underground. There, such miners as Maheu (Gérard Depardieu), the creepy Chaval (Jean-Roger Milo), and the troubled newcomer, Étienne (Renaud), ply their spine-cracking trade and work up steam against the venal demands of the company. Depardieu is all lusty brawn and strident yearnings, but Maheu is too dull and decent a role for the actor's loutish sense of fun. The movie itself is a largely fun-free zone. Just occasionally, everything clicks: when a stolid, silent old miner strangles the life out of a rich young girl, you feel the rage of a whole society sharpened to a terrible point. In French.—A.L. (3/14/94) (Paris.)

GUARDING TESS—Nicolas Cage plays Doug Chesnic, a Secret Service agent assigned to protect a widowed former First Lady named Tess Carlisle (Shirley MacLaine). Hugh Wilson's movie is clearly meant to be one of those heartwarming comedies about mismatched people who, after driving each other crazy for ninety minutes, discover love and mutual respect just in time for the final fadeout. It's a dull, poky picture, which provides an unwelcome showcase for MacLaine's increasingly insufferable cute-gorgon shtick and no showcase at all for Cage's tremendous comic talents. Playing an upright, conscientious character straitjackets him, and it's not much fun to watch dutiful Doug being humiliated by willful Tess in scene after scene. Far from warming the heart, this grisly spectacle makes the blood run cold.—T.R. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Murray Hill Cinemas, Beekman, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center. . . . ¶ Orpheum VII; through April 7.)

THE HUDSUCKER PROXY—It's 1958, and Norville Barnes (Tim Robbins) is a schmuck from out of town, come to make his fortune in New York. Meanwhile, Hudsucker Industries, headed by the scheming Sidney J. Mussberger (Paul Newman), is looking for a total idiot to stand in as president for a while. Slap the two together, throw in a motormouth journalist (Jennifer Jason Leigh), and you've made yourself a new kind of comedy: retro-screwball. But shouldn't moviemakers be investigating the modern implications of screwball, instead of retreading old ground? Still, Joel and Ethan Coen (who wrote the screenplay with Sam Raimi) know every inch of that ground, and the resulting act of homage provides their most likable film since "Raising Arizona." It means almost nothing, and slips out of your mind the moment you leave the theatre, but for a couple of hours it feels bright and brassy, shot in the clean, vertiginous style that the Coen brothers have made their own. The casting is a bit off-key: Robbins is too practiced a smoothie to make a credible jerk, and Leigh's Katharine Hepburn impersonation may tear at your nerves. Newman has a lot of fun; he unwinds the picture, relaxing its desperate need to show off. Joel Coen directed—A.L. (Village Theatre VII, Tower East, Chelsea Cinemas, and 84th Street Sixplex.)

IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER—Jim Sheridan's ragged, fascinating new movie is based on the autobiography of Gerry Conlon, a Belfast Catholic who spent nearly fifteen years in British prisons for a crime he didn't commit. Conlon (Daniel Day-Lewis) and three friends were accused of participating in the 1974 bombing of a pub near London, in which five people were killed; the only evidence against Conlon was his own confession, extracted from him by means of a brutal police interrogation. When Sheridan and his co-screenwriter, Terry George, try to function as historians, the movie feels shaky. But when Gerry and his father (Pete Postlethwaite)—who has been convicted on a different charge—get to prison, the filmmakers begin to explore their real theme, which is the intimate emotional consequences of oppression and prejudice.—T.R. (1/24/94) (First & 62nd Cinemas, Waverly, and Chelsea Cinemas.)

JIMMY HOLLYWOOD—Barry Levinson wrote and directed this dark, nervous comedy about fame and misfortune. Against all the odds, it's his most searching, most carefree project in years, a return to the robustness of "Diner" and "Tin Men." Joe Pesci does his jumpy, unstoppable number as Jimmy Alto, a would-be actor stuck on the wrong side of Hollywood with nothing but his hopes. He used to be an aluminum-siding salesman, one of Levinson's Tin Men, so you know that he'll never give up. Jimmy and the dopey William (Christian Slater), a sidekick without much kick, truss up a local thief, dump him in front of the police station, and thereby, without really trying, launch a new vigilante group on the streets of L.A. Jimmy's girlfriend (Victoria Abril) is horrified, but this mad and pathetic tough-guy act is his ticket to stardom—it works. Levinson doesn't just follow this break for freedom; he leads the way, letting his camera run ahead of the script and tell its own tale of promise and disappointment. It takes a bright-eyed director, for instance, to make a chase sequence look fresh, but somehow, with a zippy tracking shot and frantic closeups of pounding feet, Levinson does it. The movie goes on too long, and the ending is milked too heavily for irony, but it makes you sit up and watch—it's serious fun.—A.L. (4/4/94) (Village Theatre VII, 34th Street Showplace, Baronet, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, Guild, and 84th Street Sixplex.)

NAKED GUN 33⅓: THE FINAL INSULT—The trailer for this movie was one of the happiest moments in recent cinema; the product itself is almost as much fun, but not quite. The third installment in the "Naked Gun" series kicks off with a pastiche of the railroad-station shoot-out from "The Untouchables," itself an homage to a sequence from "Battleship Potemkin." (All we need is some Russian director to send up this version, and we'd be back where we started.) The film stars Leslie Nielsen as Frank Drebin, but then nobody else could star as Frank Drebin. Nielsen has taken the art of deadpan into uncharted territory, marrying a polite, paternal manner to a state of acute mental shutdown. The new movie, directed by Peter Segal, doesn't always get it right; it puts Drebin through too many pratfalls, leaving him dishevelled, which doesn't suit the man at all. But there is plenty of random chaos, leading to a nuclear-envelope scene at the Academy Awards, and the parodies keep on springing out of nowhere. Some work better than others; the seventies scene, complete with giant Afro, is a joy, whereas the "Thelma & Louise" rip-off goes nowhere and fizzles out. But these movies have traditionally relied on quantity of gags rather than quality; it is the determination to act stupid, to do anything rather than lapse into seriousness, that makes them such good company. With Priscilla Presley and Fred Ward. Not in French.—A.L. (Village Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, 34th Street Showplace, New York Twin, East 85th Street, 84th Street Sixplex, and Astor Plaza.)

THE PAPER—Ron Howard's big-city-newspaper comedy is a game try at reviving a great Hollywood genre. It doesn't adhere very scrupulously to the classical form, but it sure does play. The movie—which follows Henry Hackett (Michael Keaton), the Metro editor of a struggling New York tabloid, through a single, absurdly gruelling day—gets most of its laughs by constantly piling fresh difficulties on top of already impossible circumstances. The furious plot complications have the effect of confirming the it's-always-something consciousness of harried city folk, and this stressed-out fatalism gives the picture an inexorable and oddly pleasing comic momentum. Keaton is at his best here, which means that his mind appears to be working at warp speed, and with a berserk, reckless lucidity. Randy Quaid, Marisa Tomei, Robert Duvall, and Jason Alexander create lively, funny characters for Keaton to bounce off, and Howard lets the actors' energy drive the movie. Unfortunately, some inappropriate yuppie philosophizing starts creeping in toward the end; it's clear that Howard and the screenwriters, David and Stephen Koepp, aren't quite willing to go all the way with the heartless, cynical wit of the genre. Also with Glenn Close and Catherine O'Hara.—T.R. (3/28/94) (Coronet, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Waverly, Chelsea Cinemas, and Ziegfeld.)

WARHOL FILMS
Campbell's
TOMATO
SOUP

At the Whitney Museum, a series of films by Andy Warhol.

JOHN DEFAZIO

Philadelphia—Tom Hanks plays a lawyer dismissed from his firm, apparently for incompetence, but really because he has AIDS. Enter Denzel Washington as a personal-injury attorney—relaxed, witty, and homophobic, but prepared to fight for justice. The result is an unorthodox blend of courtroom drama and old-style weepie, and somehow it comes off. With Jonathan Demme in charge there's a guarantee of taste and skill—if anything, the movie is too optimistic, convinced that everyone in America can be won round to its own standards of tolerance. Of course it should stand up for gay rights, but do we also need a speech about how wonderful lawyers are? Fortunately, this preachiness never swamps the picture, thanks largely to spirited playing from Tom Hanks, who looks full of life right up to the end. The movie is affecting, sometimes silly, but determined to take risks.—A.L. (12/27/93-1/3/94) (Village Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, and Criterion Center. . . . ¶ Gemini; through April 7.)

The Piano—Sometime in the last century, a Scottish mute called Ada (Holly Hunter) travels to New Zealand with her beloved piano and her daughter Flora (Anna Paquin). She is engaged to Stewart (Sam Neill), but it is his right-hand man, Baines (Harvey Keitel), who becomes the focus of her interest. He buys the piano, and gives her a chance to win it back: an erotic agreement that gathers intensity and drives the film onward to its gasping conclusion. The writer and director, Jane Campion, has turned her native New Zealand, with its desolate beaches and writhing forests, into a potent backdrop; the rain and mud make the love story look like trench warfare—you come away from the movie battered and amazed. It's almost too wrought and compressed for its own good, but the performances breathe it full of life. Hunter, especially, gives a fiery portrait of a rebellious Victorian spirit.—A.L. (11/29/93) (First & 62nd Cinemas, Quad Cinema, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas. . . . ¶ 34th Street Showplace; through April 7.)

Reality Bites—Ben Stiller's film is a romantic comedy about what has come to be called Generation X. The characters are just out of college, and they're not thrilled about their prospects: they're overeducated and underemployed, and no one seems to know, or care, what they're going through. The picture has its charms: Stiller's direction gives it an appropriately loose, drifting rhythm; Winona Ryder, in the central role, has a fresh, natural style that makes even the most contrived dialogue sound authentic. But the story is essentially a thin and conventional romantic triangle, straight out of thirties Hollywood; the filmmakers try to disguise the fluffiness by unleashing a torrent of trash-culture allusions and sociological truisms.—T.R. (3/7/94) (First & 62nd Cinemas, Orpheum VII, Art Greenwich Twin, 23rd St. West Triplex, and 62nd & Broadway.)

Schindler's List—The story of Oskar Schindler (Liam Neeson), a dashing and resourceful German Catholic businessman who saved over a thousand Polish Jews from almost certain annihilation by the Nazis, is extraordinary even by the standards of Holocaust literature. Steven Spielberg's film, adapted by Steven Zaillian from the 1982 book by Thomas Keneally, runs better than three hours and doesn't seem a minute too long. Spielberg respects the essential mystery of the protagonist's heroism, and uses his prodigious skills with an intensity that he hasn't shown in a long time: he captures images of experiences that most of us thought we would never see represented adequately on the screen. This is by far the finest, fullest dramatic (i.e., nondocumentary) film ever made about the Holocaust. The wonderfully expressive black-and-white cinematography is by Janusz Kaminski.—T.R. (12/20/93) (First & 62nd Cinemas, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, and Regency.)

A Tale of Winter—Directed by Eric Rohmer. In French. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

The Wonderful, Horrible Life of Leni Riefenstahl—This German documentary is a profoundly unsettling three hours at the movies. Riefenstahl, now ninety-one years old, made two brilliant documentaries—"Triumph of the Will" (1935) and "Olympia" (1938)—under the aegis of the Nazi Party. She was known as "Hitler's favorite filmmaker," but has always insisted that her movies were never meant to advance a political program—that she looked at contemporary events with the pure, disinterested eye of an artist. Subjected to on-camera interrogation by this film's director, Ray Müller, she sticks to that story. If you believe her, she's one kind of monster; if you don't, she's another. The juxtaposition of her grotesque apologia with clips from her grandiose, strikingly composed films makes for a bizarre and sobering spectacle. In German.—T.R. (3/28/94) (Film Forum.)

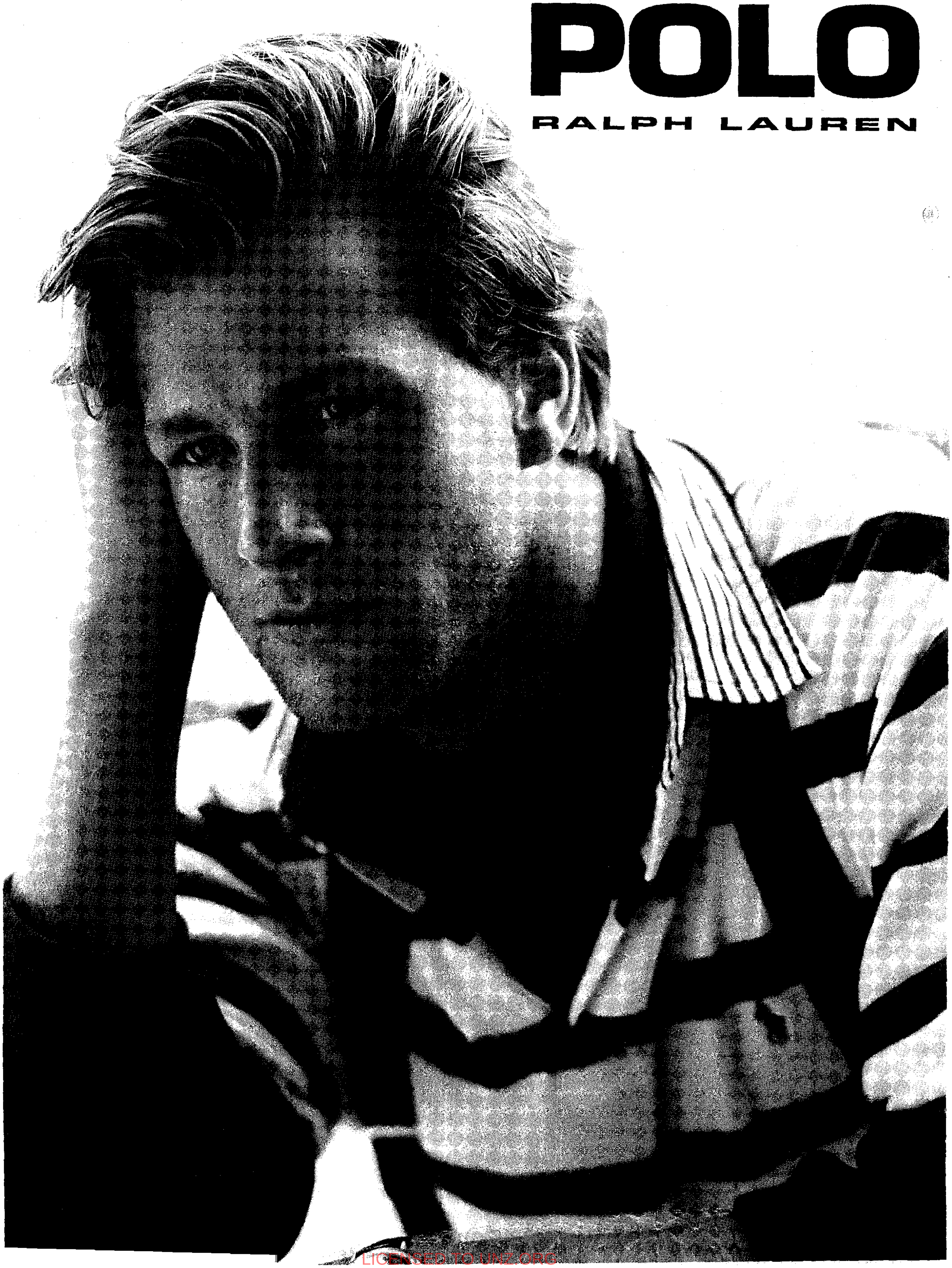
REVIVALS

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael and Michael Sragow.)

Chained (1934)—Joan Crawford and Clark Gable and a superabundance of M-G-M's big, turgid, melodramatic emotions. It's all somewhere between camp and plod, but with a strong enough sexual current between Crawford and Gable to make it a hit. She plays a woman who's going with a married man (Otto Kruger) when she meets Gable. Clarence Brown directed.—P.K. (American Museum of the Moving Image; April 10.)

The Choirboys (1977)—In his novel, Joseph Wambaugh, drawing on his own experiences as an L.A. cop, tried to show how the unpredictability, violence, and stifling bureaucracy of big-city police work can drive cops to crazy extremes after hours. They let go at "choir practices"—late-night MacArthur Park bacchanals that build up as many tensions as their jobs do. Since this Robert Aldrich movie skirts serious cases, the anti-heroes' fits of madness and melancholy are inexplicable: most of the grisly on-the-job episodes it retains from the book are played for yucks. Aldrich shifts gears like a drunk driver. An early suicide scene is a tipoff to his lack of control—a terrified girl's fall gets a huge laugh. The only actor to survive in style is Burt Young; as the aptly named Dom Scuzzi, he has a confident slovenliness and a laugh like a strangled quack. The rest of the gifted, abused cast includes Charles Durning, Louis Gossett, Jr., Randy Quaid, and James Woods.—M.S. (Walter Reade Theatre; April 7-8.)

The Ladykillers (1956)—This sinister black comedy of murder accelerates until it becomes a grotesque fantasy of murder. The actors seem to be having a boisterous good time getting themselves knocked off. Alec Guinness, almost done in by great hideous teeth—so enormous they give him master-criminal status—is the leader of a horrendous gang that includes Peter Sellers as Harry, the plump, awkward teddy boy. Katie Johnson is the cheerful old lady who upsets their fiendish plans simply by living in a world of her own. As her victims are, in some ways, even less real than she (she, at least, is as real as a good fairy), the disasters that befall them are extravagantly funny. With Cecil Parker, Herbert Lom, Danny Green, Jack Warner, and Frankie Howerd as the barrow boy. Directed by Alexander Mackendrick; written by William Rose.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; April 8 and 10.)


POLO
RALPH LAUREN

THE NEW YORKER

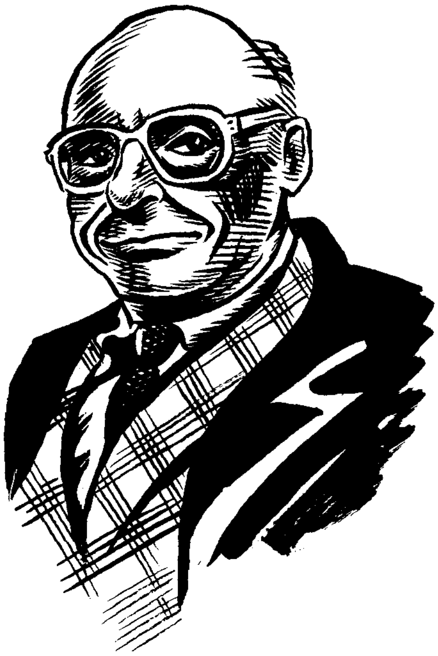
THE TALK OF THE TOWN

MILLER'S TALES

“She doesn't have a line in her face—that's what happens when you get ninety million dollars,” Arthur Miller said the other day. He was talking about Amy Irving, and, in his way, about the fact that she received a king's ransom when she was divorced from Steven Spielberg, in 1989. “You look at the check and all the lines disappear,” Miller went on. “You're fresh as a daisy.” He was talking about Amy Irving's face because it had not yet, to his mind, aged appropriately—that is, appropriately for the role she has as a psychosomatic paralytic in his new play, “Broken Glass.” It was, then, mostly a problem of getting the wig and makeup right; for Amy Irving was otherwise beautiful and excellent, and she was at that very moment onstage in a matinée performance of the play at the Long Wharf Theatre, in New Haven. Ron Silver was another kind of problem. He had brought a collection of Al Pacino mannerisms, among other things, to the part of an upper-middle-class Jewish doctor, and was soon to be replaced by David Dukes.

Miller—seventy-eight, lanky, and leathery—was sitting backstage in the executive director's office at the Long Wharf, where “Broken Glass” was completing a sold-out five-week tryout. Next week it moves to Broadway, where no Miller play has opened since 1980, when “The American Clock,” a drama about the Depression, had a brief run at the Biltmore. Abroad, Miller is considered America's greatest living playwright (this year alone, productions of his plays are running in England, France, Sweden, Greece, and Japan), but here he is something of a critics' punching bag. His last play, “The Last Yankee,” was hailed as a triumph in London in the spring of 1993 and had an eight-month run in the West End, but when it had opened, a couple of months earlier, at the Manhattan Theatre Club, the *Times* chose not to send its first-string critic. Miller's new play, which is set in Brooklyn in the late thirties, explores the links between a Jewish woman's hysteria and the public psychosis of German anti-Semitism. Its themes, of tribalism and mania, are all too sadly up-to-date. “I sense people withdrawing into all kinds of sub-societies, whether it be gays or women or religions,” he said. “It's destructive, because, in their extreme wings, they all adopt the idea that any method of securing their aims or protecting themselves is legitimate. Just yesterday, I heard on the radio of an anti-abortion organization that declares that it has the right to murder a doctor who commits an abortion. Assassination, they claim, is right. It's what Hitler believed.”

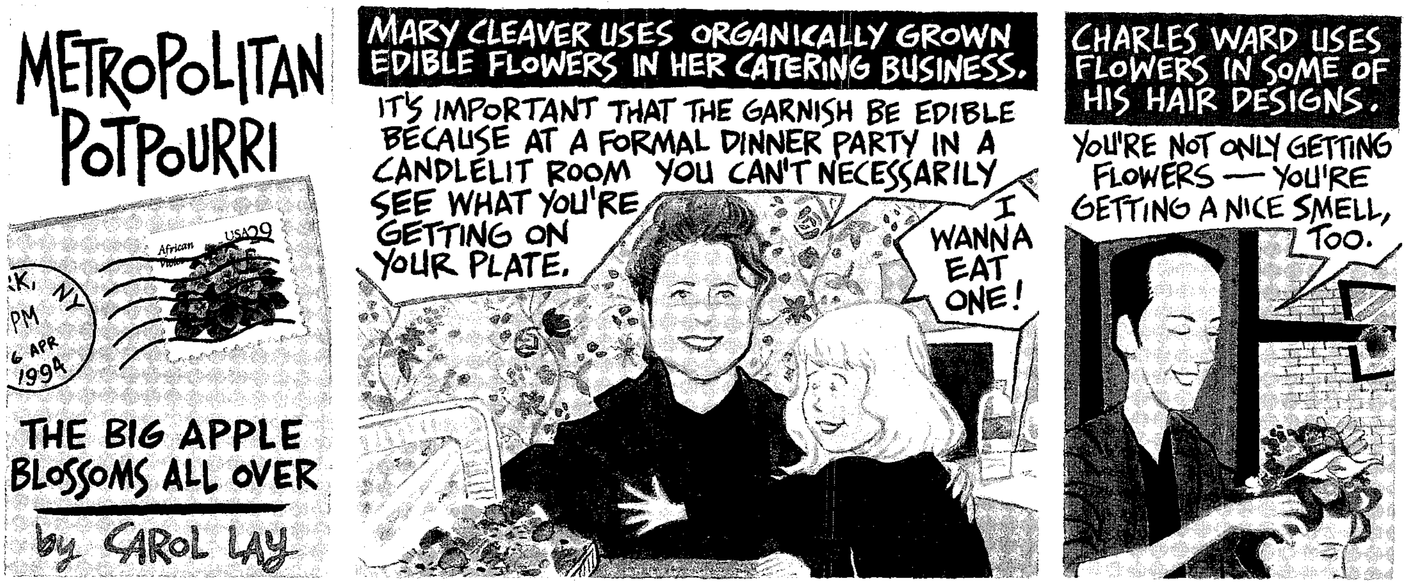
ILLUSTRATIONS BY DOUG ALLEN



Miller went on to say that he wrote “Broken Glass,” as he has written all his more recent plays, in a twelve-by-twenty-foot cabin adjacent to his house in Roxbury, Connecticut. “It's my little synagogue,” he said. “I sit down there and I pray. If it doesn't go well, I'll be there an hour or two and just leave in disgust. If it does go well, I can go six hours. When it comes toward the end of something, I can go indefinitely—until I get so hungry I come down to the house.”

Talking about his writing, he tended to sound like a playwright in search of a more engaged theatre public here. Of Broadway today he said, “If you're out of show business, you're out of luck. I don't want to bore anybody. And I work like hell to entertain people. But that isn't all that one is about.” Of Broadway theatregoers forty, forty-five years ago he said, “When I started out, they were liberal in their politics and their feelings. They cared a hell of a lot about what was happening to the world, to the country, to the city. It wasn't a cynical audience, whatever you might say for it. I don't have that feeling about an audience now.” Of Broadway's future he said, “Maybe we're now an electronic culture, a film culture, and this thing called theatre is nostalgia.”

The performance of “Broken Glass”


METROPOLITAN POTPOURRI
African Violet USA29
K, NY PM 6 APR 1994
THE BIG APPLE BLOSSOMS ALL OVER
by CAROL LAY
MARY CLEAVER USES ORGANICALLY GROWN EDIBLE FLOWERS IN HER CATERING BUSINESS.
IT'S IMPORTANT THAT THE GARNISH BE EDIBLE BECAUSE AT A FORMAL DINNER PARTY IN A CANDLELIT ROOM YOU CAN'T NECESSARILY SEE WHAT YOU'RE GETTING ON YOUR PLATE.
I WANNA EAT ONE!
CHARLES WARD USES FLOWERS IN SOME OF HIS HAIR DESIGNS.
YOU'RE NOT ONLY GETTING FLOWERS — YOU'RE GETTING A NICE SMELL, TOO.

had reached its finale, and the sound of applause and an occasional "Bravo!" filtered through the wall against which Miller was leaning his head. "The audience is drilled into this play like an eight-inch screw," he said, and smiled.

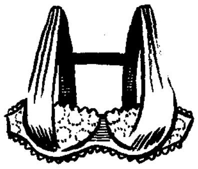
Miller talked a little more about writing for the theatre. He said that when he writes a play now he is aware that it may never be done here, and that if it is done here there are likely to be problems not only in attracting the audience he seeks but in finding the actors who can embody and dramatize the moral questions his plays attempt to pose.

"The theatrical education of the young actors is minimal," Miller remarked. "They don't know the literature. They don't know very much about anything you'd think was the culture of the theatre."

So, in that cabin in western Connecticut, whom is Miller writing for?

"I guess it's still my father," he said, and seemed surprised by his answer. "He was illiterate. He'd ask what I was writing, and I'd tell him the story. I could see in his eyes whether it was going to hit home. I can't remember a time when he was wrong. He was like the old Hollywood moguls. He wanted to be astonished, and when he was—Boy, the power that came out of him." Miller leaned back in his chair and stared off into space. Then he said, "The dead ones. I'm writing for the dead, I suppose. Or the audience that is to come."

DOROTHY GALLIGAN, IN A SUPPORTING ROLE



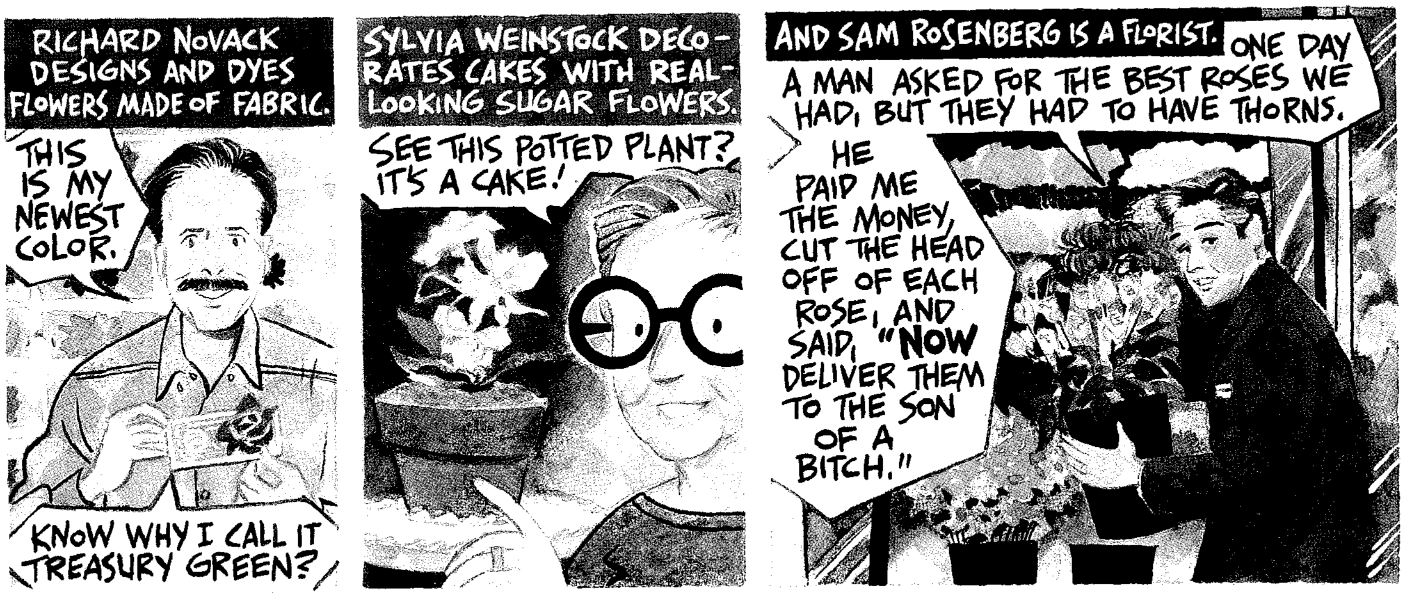
When the Super Uplift Bra was introduced in New York last month by its manufacturer, the British firm Gossard—bras styled to plunge *here* and push *there* are very much *here* again, fashionwise—a company spokeswoman remarked that the bra "is for any type of woman who wants to make the most of what she has." She wasn't talking about Dorothy Galligan, exactly, but she might have been. For nineteen years, Ms. Galligan's breasts have been the center of attention on Madison and Park Avenues between Thirtieth and Fortieth Streets. Most of America's bras are designed in those blocks, and most of those bras are engineered around Ms. Galligan. She is a 34B, which in the business of bra-making is quintessential. Building a bra that is comfortable and everything else, too, is an intricate feat of styling and charting: a design for a new bra can require up to two hundred fittings, and all prototypes are fitted on models who measure 34B. Several models share the work on Madison and Park in the Thirties, but Ms. Galligan is the busiest. Her first appointment each workday is at seven-thirty, with the designers at Warner's, where bras are developed not just for the house label but also for Victoria's Secret and other firms. After she leaves Warner's she makes the rounds of perhaps ten more houses, taking no breaks—not even a lunch hour—before finishing up, around six-thirty. On particularly harried days, she's been known to go from fitting to fitting wearing nothing but undergarments and a fur coat.

When we met up with Ms. Galligan one recent morning at Warner's, at 90 Park Avenue, she was wearing a Bettina Riedel jumpsuit and waiting to start work. She would not reveal her age—she looked, to us, like someone who could pass for Michelle Pfeiffer's older, more sensible sister—but did reveal that she had been working as a cabaret singer in the seventies when her singing coach (male), who had somehow heard that a company that supplies underwires to the bra industry was searching for a model, inquired about her breast size. "I was 'Excuse me?' " Ms. Galligan recalled. "But I went, for a kick, and just never stopped."

She led us into a studio decorated with photographs of Marilyn Monroe, and introduced us to Don Allen, one of the industry's up-and-coming designers. A friendly man in a snazzy Boss suit, he said, "I have bras in my genes," and went on to explain that his father had worked for Playtex. Meanwhile, Ms. Galligan slipped the top of her jumpsuit down. Mr. Allen immediately appraised her bra, which was black and plunging. "Nice, Dotty," he said, and then inquired, "Wacoal?"

Ms. Galligan nodded and, turning to us, said, "We always play Guess the Bra."

They got down to work. She tried


RICHARD NOVACK DESIGNS AND DYES FLOWERS MADE OF FABRIC.
THIS IS MY NEWEST COLOR.
KNOW WHY I CALL IT TREASURY GREEN?
SYLVIA WEINSTOCK DECORATES CAKES WITH REAL-LOOKING SUGAR FLOWERS.
SEE THIS POTTED PLANT? IT'S A CAKE!
AND SAM ROSENBERG IS A FLORIST.
ONE DAY A MAN ASKED FOR THE BEST ROSES WE HAD, BUT THEY HAD TO HAVE THORNS.
HE PAID ME THE MONEY, CUT THE HEAD OFF OF EACH ROSE, AND SAID, "NOW DELIVER THEM TO THE SON OF A BITCH."

on five or six prototypes. He used his tape measure. He used the freckles on Ms. Galligan's breasts as guides. (If the center of a prototype covers a certain freckle between her breasts, he knows he's got the design properly calibrated.) They spoke a language we did not always understand. One key term was "button" (shoptalk for nipple). Another was "elevation" (location of buttons). Ms. Galligan said, "You're nailing me to the cross" only once. She meant "Get me out of this thing."

When she donned a Western-style number, Mr. Allen tried to get the cowboys printed on the fabric to fall in the centers of the cups. Next, she tried on a white stretch-eyelet item, and Mr. Allen was not happy with the scantiness of its cups. "It's an everyday bra," he said. "I don't want it to look like peaches on a platter." Ms. Galligan got out of it and into a gold Chantilly eyelash-fringed "balconette." The tops of the cups were cut so low that Ms. Galligan's breasts seemed to be standing on a veranda and waving. Mr. Allen was not unhappy; the cups were low-cut by design. It was a "fifteen-second bra," he said; if it does what it's supposed to—seduce—it will be off in no time.

Later that day, we caught up with Ms. Galligan at the offices of Lily of France. There, she confirmed for us that, as she put it, "the breast-oriented society is back." She estimated that when she started in the business each company produced perhaps seven bras a season. "Now it's more like a hundred," she said. She mentioned, too, that padded bras were once again flying off the hangers. "Just a few years ago, you couldn't sell a pad," she said. "Now you can hardly sell a bra without one."

Ms. Galligan attributed her success to being born with the right equipment and to a talent for sensing instantly when a bra is "off" by even an eighth of an inch. She herself owns thousands of bras, she told us, and she added that she could not live without underwire, personally and also professionally. "This is the only industry in which models can last well into their fifties, but who are we kidding? There's not a bra model alive who doesn't wear wire," she said. "Some even sleep in them."

THE SUBJECT WAS POTHOLES

WINTER'S done with, you have to think, but it has left behind a record number of potholes here—three hundred thousand potholes, if you want to know the New York City Department of Transportation's estimate, which is arrived at who knows how. Anyway, there are all these holes that, was this a world in which government was actually being reinvented, or something, might get filled by fewer of those guys waving you around those orange cones, because they would be using Perma-Patch, Patch Master, Vac 'n' Patch, and any of numerous other paving materials and techniques. This, at any rate, was Topic A at a "Pothole Symposium," which was actually a get-together of the members of the New York City Chapter of the Society of Asphalt Technologists—who would also have a lot to say about the baked ziti and the eggplant parmigiana when it was put out on the buffet table of La Bella Vita in Ozone Park, which is where they met on the first Wednesday night of spring. On a table across the room from the buffet table were a lot of brochures for Perma-Patch and the rest, along with a display for an "environmentally safe" type of asphalt—clumps of it were in a plastic bucket filled with water, as were two tiny goldfish, which were swimming, barely.

There was a cocktail hour, because the chapter here does things right, and, with your drink and a little something nice to nibble on, you could talk to Professor Jameel Ahmad, who is the chairman of the Civil Engineering Department of Cooper Union. He was at the table with all the informative stuff, explaining an invention of his called Fleximesh. "You put this mesh into the hole and then fill it with asphalt," he said. "I invented it a couple of years ago. I have two patents on it. The mesh is shaped like a honeycomb, which from nature we know is very strong." Professor Ahmad paused for a moment, then went on to say, "I know that I'm a professor, and that fixing potholes is considered low-tech. I used to be a nerd. The nerds, they're all working on the information superhighway. I'm dedicated to the highways with potholes in them."

Over by the bar—which was not

your wine-and-beer-only kind of setup, by the way—the conversation was being pretty much dominated by Louis Sarro, of New York Paving; Joe Competello, of Multiquip; and Gary Cervelli, of Trius. Soil compaction? They talked about it. Backhoe broom attachments? Same. At one point, Mr. Sarro explained his conservative philosophy with regard to the pothole like this: "Let me simplify things. New York City is the center of the pothole universe. I've seen all kinds of materials come and go over the years. It's a matter of cleaning the hole right, and putting down a good tack coat, and still it's not gonna last forever. Potholes are like people. They keep falling apart."

Out came the buffet, and it should be said that the eggplant, which is not easy to do right on a buffet, was done right. Everybody ate, and afterward the assistant commissioner for the D.O.T.'s Bureau of Highway Operations, Anthony J. Fasulo—who also happens to be the president of the chapter here—got down to business, beginning with an introduction of guests at the head table. Among them were Elliot Sander, the new commissioner of the D.O.T., and Samuel Schwartz, who writes the *News'* famous "Gridlock Sam" column. Mr. Fasulo then turned the microphone over to the evening's presenters with these words: "We may not solve the problem tonight, but together we constitute a formidable think tank that can make real progress in the struggle against the pothole plague."

It should be noted that Mr. Sarro, upon hearing this, pushed his plate away from him and said, kind of under his breath, "They're gonna reinvent the wheel tonight, but that wheel's still gonna hit potholes."

One by one, the presenters approached the microphone. Some of them used a slide projector to show how you go about doing hot patches, cold patches, throw-and-roll patches, throw-and-go patches—methods of filling potholes that, to be honest, a lot of the guys knew about already. One of the presenters was from South Dakota. No sooner did he mention that he was from South Dakota than somebody shouted "Where's that?," and right off somebody else shouted, "Where there's no potholes, and all this stuff works!"

The presenter from South Dakota unveiled a new one-man pothole-repair vehicle called an RA-300 Patcher, and it did get some people roused up. But then somebody said, "Tell it to the union—ten men to every pothole," and that was that.

NEITHER GUYS NOR DOLLS

EARLY the other evening, the girls' bathroom downstairs at Lucky Cheng's, a California-Asian restaurant in the East Village, was crowded with waitresses—but not, strictly speaking, with girls. At the moment, Lucky Cheng's, where Yoko Ono and Tabitha Soren, among others, have been known to dine, is the only restaurant here—for that matter, probably in the world—where the waitresses are Asian drag queens. But the owners, a married couple named Robert and Hayne Jason and a middle-aged man for whom the place is named, Mi Ching Cheng, are planning to remedy that situation. Because of the restaurant's popularity, which might have something to do with the gender-bending magnificence of "M. Butterfly" and "Farewell My Concubine," they plan to open a chain of such restaurants, starting later this year in New Orleans, where Hayne grew up. (Her mother is currently searching out Asian drag queens there.) The designer Manolo, another frequenter of Lucky Cheng's, sums up the charm of the place this way: "The food is very good, but a dining experience is even better when a waitress addresses you as"—he shifted into a mock "Paris Is Burning" mode—"*Miss Thing*."

Among those in the girls' bathroom that evening was Danielle. She had spiky gold hair and said that she was from Taiwan, and that when she wasn't serving food and wearing a dress she was an artist, whose work is about process. She was trying on a leather vest with eighteen zippers, but discarded it for a sequinned red dress. She also wore combat boots. "When I look at American drags, I don't get their humor," she said. "They relate to 'The Brady Bunch,' whereas I'm influenced by Asian sci-fi movies, where the women are goddesses dressed in futuristic fantasy." She added, "Here we're trying to get away from the image of the China Doll. It's so stereotypical."

Anita, who has been known to lip-synch "The Power of Love" for guests she really likes, was also in the girls' room. She said she used to be a corporal in the Singapore Army, but when her parents found out she was cross-dressing while off duty, they sent her to America. "So I'd learn to like being a man, honey," she explained, smiling and adjusting her yellow feathered jacket.

Upstairs, a little later, Hayne Jason explained how she and her husband had settled on the Asian-drag-queen theme for their place. Her parents bought the building in 1986, when it was a gay bathhouse, she said, and then she hired a Harvard food historian and converted it into Cave Canem, a restaurant that served ancient-Roman dishes. "We had a lot of glamorous lesbians working here," Hayne said. Cheng, a traditional Chinese family man, was her head busboy. Eventually, Cave Canem folded, a couple of other restaurants came and went, Hayne and Robert and Cheng got to talking business, and when Hayne and Robert came up with the idea for a new place—it arose, essentially, because Hayne knew some drag queens and liked light California-Asian cooking—Cheng decided to go in with them.

Cheng soon lost interest in the project, however, and he now spends his time in the bar downstairs, where he has converted a Jacuzzi from the bath days into a goldfish pond. It turns out that what he really liked was the lesbians. ♦

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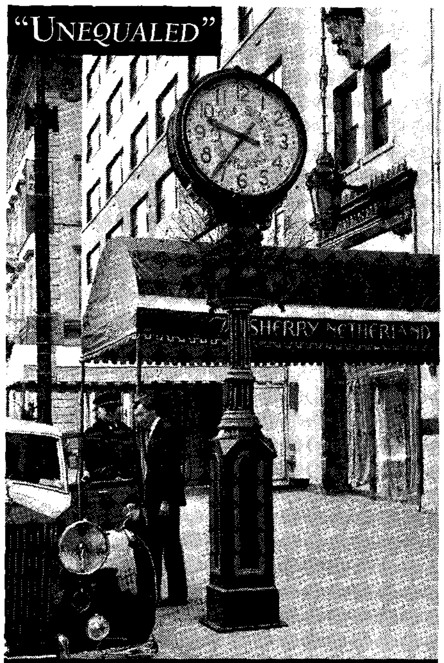

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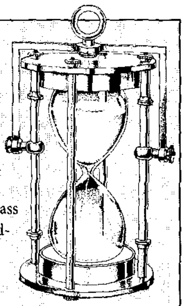

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VILLE ET VILLAGE

ANNALS OF COMMUNICATIONS

THE MAGIC BOX

Time Warner is testing its futuristic vision of services that will be available from the TV. But how much interaction do Americans really want?

BY KEN AULETTA

KATE seemed to be the perfect customer for what Time Warner calls its Full Service Network—the first switched, digitized, fibre-optic, multimedia, interactive TV system. She was just thirty, and so was presumed to be open to change; she was affluent, and so was presumed to be willing to pay for what she watched; and on a form she had filled out for a recent Time Warner "viability test" she had expressed a desire to be liberated from network programmers, who told her what she could watch and when. Kate (not her real name) said she viewed about seventeen hours of television a week. When she was handed an unfamiliar air mouse, or remote-control device, she was soon handling it as if she had been using it for years. And then the down button on the remote got stuck. "A pothole on the information highway," said Paul Sagan, the managing editor of Time Inc.'s embryonic News on Demand, which is one of many menu choices on the proposed Full Service Network.

Sagan, along with his project partner, Walter Isaacson, who is the editor of new media for Time Inc., and other executives, observed Kate from behind a mirrored window in the offices of a testing service in Elmsford, New York, to see how the system in progress fared in tests. Their laboratory was a makeshift living room with two Danish-modern sofas and a twenty-four-inch TV. They watched as Kate and a succession of other viewers, with the verbal assistance of Beth Blumenthal, a professional tester, toyed with the remote-control device. They watched as Kate and the others clicked icons on the screen, to call up that evening's nightly news, or weather, or sports, or in-depth accounts of President Clinton's health plan. In addition, there were icons for various other services on F.S.N.: movies on demand that could be paused or rewound; published reviews or highlights to help a viewer choose what to watch; video shopping catalogues; food services; video games; video phone calls.

"Our new electronic superhighway will change the way people use television," Time Warner's chairman and chief executive officer, Gerald M. Levin, had said when he announced the network, in January of 1993. "By having the *consumer access unlimited* services, the Full Service Network will render irrelevant the notion of sequential channels on a TV set."

The executives grew excited as Kate, a composed Geena Davis look-alike, said things that seemed to justify Levin's decision to invest five billion dollars over five years to create F.S.N. She told Blumenthal that she watched a lot of news, including CNN, "60 Minutes," and "20/20," and said that she liked the element of control that Time Warner's variety of news choices allowed her. If Kate got home too late to see the news show she wanted to watch, she could still see it when she—not a network—chose to schedule it. Blumenthal asked Kate what she would pay for such a news-on-demand service, and she replied, "I'm a person who would pay for convenience." Blumenthal pressed, asking Kate how much she would pay. "Comparable to whatever I pay for HBO," Kate said. Would she pay fifteen dollars a month for such a service? Certainly. Twenty? Probably.

Those who watched Kate and other test subjects from behind the glass had had a few days of audience testing so good that even Time Warner executives who were initially skeptical about news on demand got caught up in the excitement of a possible "killer app," as a breakthrough application is described in computer lingo. After Levin and other executives saw tapes of Kate and the other test viewers, Isaacson felt that they had pierced whatever clouds of gloom remained. "I now know our organization is firmly committed to it," he said of the news service. "They now feel we have a good product."

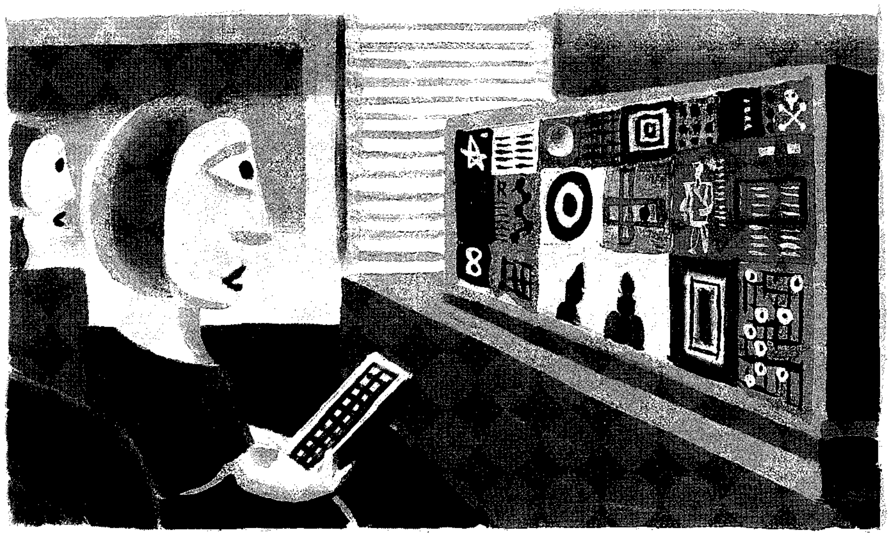
Perhaps more than any of the other cable and telephone and computer and consumer-electronics companies that are planning to test such services—they include Viacom, Hearst, Bell Atlantic, Sega, U S West, Microsoft, A.T. & T., I.B.M., Comcast, Tele-Communications, Inc., and the Discovery Channel—Time Warner is a devout believer in interactive video on demand. Last January, Levin told a television-industry convention, "The losers will be those who decide that they can wait and watch, that there is no urgency involved, that they can go on working and producing in splendid isolation from a technology that will transform the way people live, work, entertain, and educate themselves." Build it, Levin fervently believes, and they will come.

To Levin and Time Warner, people like Kate seemed to justify their faith that the Full Service Network could transform not just television-viewing but the use of all leisure time. She was a typical potential customer, they thought, a customer who would feel liberated by the new technology. After a research session of about an hour, Kate stepped outside to sign some forms, and I asked her if she would really be willing to pay as much as twenty dollars a month for news on demand. She gave an answer that suggests the limitations of anecdotal research, an answer that would probably depress Time Warner's researchers. "I live on a trust fund," she said nonchalantly. "I just tell my lawyer to pay the bills."

THREE assumptions underlie Time Warner's ambitious plans: that customers want to program for themselves, and not be merely passive viewers; that customers are willing to pay extra to be so empowered; and, finally, that in return for the convenience customers will pay as little attention to the charges as they do to their video-store bills. By the end of this year, Levin plans to have tested these assumptions in about four thousand households in Orlando, Florida. Time Warner's laboratory for those tests is in a three-story mirrored-glass building in the Maitland commercial center, about five miles north of Orlando. Sixteen executives will work there, and the brain of the Full Service Network will be contained in a twelve-hundred-square-foot operations room. The chilled room is filled with stacks of disk drives, called "servers," and is equipped with software from Silicon Graphics and an A.T. & T. switching system referred to as Asynchronous Transfer Mode, or A.T.M. The servers house a mammoth digitized library. James A. Chiddix, Time Warner Cable's senior vice-president for engineering and technology, told me that initially the library will contain more than a terabyte of memory—the equivalent of a million megabytes. (Personal computers usually have hard-disk memories of something between twenty and eighty megabytes.) That single terabyte will store the equivalent of five hundred motion pictures, and the switches will permit a thousand customers to access this library simultaneously.

To request a selection, a customer will click a remote-control device, sending an infrared signal to a box on top of the TV set, and the box will send it through a coaxial cable to an aluminum node box, no more than three-quarters of a mile away, which will be underground or on a telephone pole. Connected to the other end of the node box is fibre-optic cable, which is crucial to the information superhighway, because its tiny strands can carry vast quantities of information with no danger of traffic jams. This wire will speed the customer's request to the operations center, and the center will comply with the request and then route the selection back to the customer. The entire process will take a nanosecond—the time it takes a remote-control button to change channels now.

The prototype of how the Time Warner system will look to the customer sits in the Maitland office of Thomas Feige, the president of the Full Service Network; this February, Time Warner first permitted an outsider to glimpse it. The network will have the normal free-TV and regular-cable channels, and, in addition, what amounts to a shopping mall will appear on the screen. The customer will navigate through the mall by clicking any of various icons on the screen—interactive games, movies, shopping, news and sports, education (learning through interactive instruction), concierge services (food, reservations), mailbox (E-mail and video conferencing), MY TV (customized shows), telephone (videophone, long-distance, or cellular-like services). A click of the movie icon, for instance, summons to the screen a menu of choices, and then the customer can either select the desired movie or browse through movie choices by category (the movies of, say, Gregory Peck or Alfred Hitchcock) or watch promotional shorts of each film choice or call up movie reviews from *Time* and other sources or select from a list of new releases. The cost to the customer, Feige expects, will be three or four dollars a movie. "We're going to do an analysis of the video stores and charge close to what they charge," he says. "If we compete with hotels, we will charge their price."



GARY PANTER

Convenience is obviously a lure. Customers would not have to go to a video store to make their movie selections or

"Your grandma and I have decided to live together."

to return tapes. Because the video server could duplicate unlimited copies of each movie, the customer would not encounter a situation that often arises at a video store: none of the top twenty popular titles are available. Unlike most pay-per-view movies, which must be watched at specified times and cannot be paused or rewound, the movie in this system can be turned on and off to fit the viewer's schedule over a given number of hours. The convenience of a movie on demand can be coupled with another convenience—food delivered on demand. I selected "The Fugitive" on Feige's system, and before it appeared on the screen an advertisement came on. "Hungry?" it asked. "How about trying a delicious pizza from Marcello's?" Click yes, and then select plain cheese, mushrooms, sausage, or other toppings. With the second click, the food is ordered. Human beings don't speak to consummate a transaction. Rather, the computer in the set-top box sends the order and the name and address of the customer to Marcello's. Some twenty minutes later, when the order arrives, the customer can pause the movie, go to the door, and get the pizza.

One day, Levin says, this system will offer such additional conveniences as the ability to renew a driver's license without braving long lines. Interactivity could also allow state lotteries to sell tickets more easily, and to save some of the money they now pay to retail outlets. (Of course, such a service would inevitably encourage gambling.) The long-term economic opportunities excite the business imagination, for the rewards can be stupendous. The cable and telephone businesses today generate close to two hundred billion dollars a year in revenues. Shopping by catalogue and other forms of shopping at home now constitute an eighty-billion-dollar annual business. Entertainment—video stores, movie theatres, theme parks, music, books, video games, theatre, gambling—is a three-hundred-and-forty-billion-dollar business, and is growing twice as fast as over-all consumer spending.

The Time Warner test, which was originally scheduled to begin this month, has been postponed until the fourth quarter of the year. Time Warner executives say that they had been rushing to meet an artificial deadline—one they'd imposed upon themselves. "We hyped it to motivate our people to get it done," Edward Adler, a Time Warner spokesman, concedes. The deadline also allowed Levin to demonstrate that he was a visionary in the mold of his late predecessor, Steve Ross. At the beginning of March, however, Time Warner decided that it was better to miss a deadline than to start a system that might baffle the customers, or even crash.

INSTITUTIONAL memory may have dictated the caution that Time Warner has displayed in launching its network. Back in 1977, Warner Amex Cable, which was a part of Warner Communications, touted something called QUBE, an interactive-TV system it planned to offer thirty thousand customers in Columbus, Ohio. Then, Warner Amex proclaimed, it would be extended to the entire nation. QUBE never left Columbus, and was folded in the mid-eighties. Still, Time Warner is wedded to the idea of video on demand. In late 1991, it launched a relatively simple cable service, called Quantum, for five thousand customers in Queens. Customers were offered a hundred and fifty channel choices, some fifty of which were dedicated to pay-per-view movies. Popular movies were broadcast at fifteen-minute intervals on six to ten channels simultaneously. Less popular titles were broadcast every thirty or sixty minutes on the remaining channels.

Richard Aurelio, the president of Time Warner's New York City Cable Group, says, "What we learned in Queens is: One, people will buy more if you give them more choices. Two, you can get them away from the video store; the thing that holds them is the ability to pause and resume. Three, we found that younger people find it easier to deal with technology than older people do. Four, we learned that the number of channels is immaterial. People don't think of it as a hundred and fifty channels; they think of it as the seventy-five analog channels they had before, and then they enter a new world. Five, we learned that you need a really good navigator system, where people feel they have a personal navigator to help them. We didn't have enough of that in Queens. It wasn't friendly enough."

There are a dozen or so American tests, but probably the broadest test of interactive TV is scheduled to commence in the fall of 1995 in Canada, where the Hearst Corporation has joined a consortium of five companies headed by Le Groupe Vidéotron, a leading cable system. When the service begins—in thirty-four thousand households in the Saguenay region of Quebec—it will offer movies on demand, home shopping, interactive banking, E-mail, and "home automation" services like energy and water management and appliance control, plus Loto-Québec. A second phase is scheduled to begin in 1996, when the consortium plans to distribute three hundred thousand set-top terminals in Quebec City. According to Alfred C. Sikes, the president of Hearst New Media and Technology, the American tests are designed more to test the technology than to see how a mass audience reacts, which is what the Canadian test is designed to do.

ONE problem with introducing interactivity, no doubt, is that the public generally doesn't have a clue about what it all means. To ask viewers what they think of a service they can't yet comprehend is like expecting an infant to read. While no one can be sure of consumer acceptance, what is known is that the technology will soon be able to deliver nearly unlimited choices on command. And it is known that consumers want to be empowered to make choices. Cable television and the Fox network would not have appropriated a third of the three networks' nightly audience if this were not so. Nor would shopping malls and catalogues and cash machines and credit cards have become as ubiquitous. It is known that customers will pay for quality—witness the phenomenon of CDs, which in ten years have captured sixty per cent of the record market—but whether only larger networks can afford the steep cost is not known. It is known that viewers will reject technology if it is as user-unfriendly as the early VCRs. It is known that providing movies on demand is a killer app, but not whether movies alone will justify the cost of a switched, interactive network. It is known that marketing will be important, for with a plethora of choices it will be harder to learn what's available. It is possible that viewers who are confronted with a blizzard of choices will simply fall back on the familiar brand names—CBS, ABC, NBC.

Those with a commercial stake in the information superhighway share several common assumptions. They reject the couch-potato model, believing that viewers want to take an active part in programming. Time Warner's Richard Aurelio says, "I don't think there's any question that if you can provide in the home the same movie customers get in a video store, and all you have to do is press a button, and you can pause and

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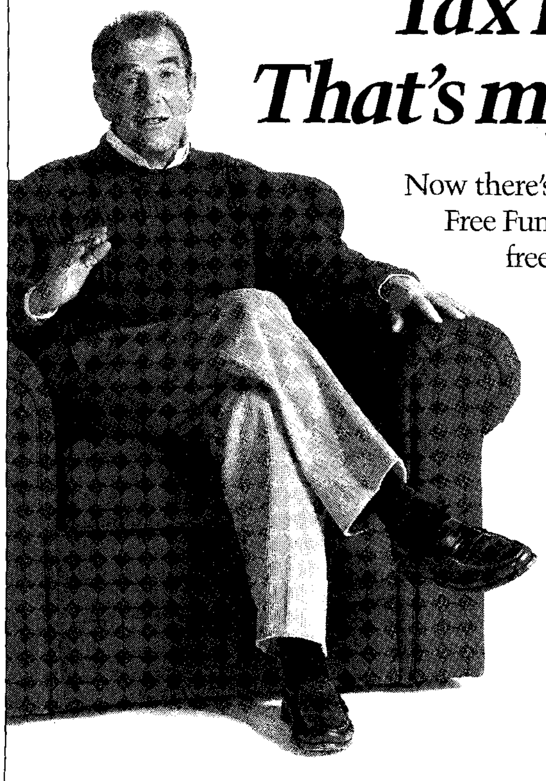

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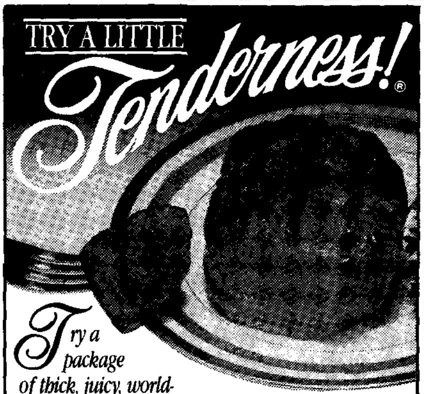

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Cartouche spells 'Joan'
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resume, which you couldn't do in our Queens experiment, then there's really no need for them to go to the video store." Two other markets commonly thought to be vulnerable to competition are home shopping and video games. Aurelio concedes that "after these, there are legitimate questions: Will they come?"

Levin believes that two other revenue sources have been overlooked. "First is advertising," he says. Because advertisers will be able to deliver addressable messages to those targeted as current or likely customers, and can do so "in highly graphic form," he expects to open a nice revenue stream here. "The other big revenue stream is telecommunications," he says. "The plumbing we're constructing can automatically carry voice, data, and video." His first target is to snare "a piece of the telephone business." If any two of these five revenue streams succeed, Time Warner's profits will undoubtedly rise.

The average family now pays a monthly bill of about fifty dollars for local and long-distance telephone service and about twenty dollars for basic cable TV. Will people pay more? Can they afford to? W. Patrick Campbell, the executive vice-president for corporate strategy and business development for Ameritech, one of the seven Baby Bells, told an industry panel in February that Ameritech estimated that the average monthly household bill for telephone and cable and interactive services would climb to a hundred dollars within five years. Another panelist, Dennis Patrick, who is the president of Time Warner Telecommunications, guessed that the average consumer "will be paying less," largely because companies like his, he thought, could deliver movies and access to long-distance telephone service more cheaply than the combination of video store and Baby Bells.

This poses another question: Can the companies putting together pay-per-view services do a better job of camouflaging the true costs? Joseph J. Collins, the chairman and C.E.O. of Time Warner's national cable operations, says of the hundred-dollar-a-month bill, "That's the wrong way to look at it.... The tradition in the cable business has been to put everything on your bill. So on your bill you get billed for basic service, you get billed for a second outlet, you get billed for program guides, HBO, etc. We've done that because, historically, it's been an efficient way to do it. That's not necessarily how other businesses run their billing practices. In fact, I suspect that as we see the Full Service Network begin to operate we're going to see a very different type of billing, where some things may be billed indirectly. For example, if you go to the video shopping mall and order a new sweater from L. L. Bean, once you order it, it comes from L. L. Bean, and so does the bill." Or, he says, maybe the monthly bill will be reduced, because in return for access to customers advertisers would subsidize part of the costs.

For Time Warner and the other companies embarked on this venture, there are at least four potential sources of revenue. There is the advertising dollar. There is the charge to consumers for use of the cable/telephone wire. There is the toll to be charged to those program services which want access to this wire, such as L. L. Bean. And there is the license fee paid to the cable company as a software supplier of, say, "Murphy Brown" episodes from Warner Bros. or "The Larry Sanders Show" from HBO.

Because this is uncharted terrain, the economics are murky. Time Inc.'s Walter Isaacson concedes that it is unclear how to structure a price for a service that has yet to be distributed. Also unresolved, he says, is who should pay whom, and how to set advertising rates when the customer base isn't known, and how the distributor (the wire) and the manufacturer (the program supplier) should divide advertising revenues. The financial models are built on sand.

Another consideration is what a more assertive federal government will do. Will the Federal Communications Commission's recent decision to scale back cable prices by seven per cent really take effect, and will this slow the private construction of the superhighway? Will local broadcasters and the networks be given more channel space, so they can challenge cable? Will cable siphon off telephone business? Will telephone steal cable revenues? Will government allow it? Will the more powerful personal computer—not the television set—be the instrument for interactivity and video on demand? All these are unknowns.

Also unknown are the social consequences, which could be vast. Some predictions are relatively safe to make. One is that this pay-per-view future promises more to the haves than to the have-nots. Poorer Americans will still have access to free TV, but they will rarely be able to afford the new technologies that would permit them to make full use of interactive TV. This would be of less significance if it concerned only consumption or entertainment, but it could also deny access to potentially vital social and economic services. Will private corporations subsidize such access? Will taxpayers? "I think as we develop services they will be subsidized," Alfred Sikes, of Hearst, who was an F.C.C. chairman under President Bush, says. "They would take on more of a food-stamp quality"—would help pay for job training, perhaps, or help defray the costs of at-home medical care.

Other social consequences can be viewed like the two sides of a coin. One side maintains that this video democracy will enhance a sense of community, the other that it will fracture communities. "This provides opportunities for more communication," says Levin, who emphasizes that the TV set will still offer free TV. There will be video bulletin boards, he points out, and interactive games, and video telephone calls, and interactive tutorials, and local C-SPANs, and home movies shown to friends and family. "It will be like Internet," Levin says. "This will create a video family that enables people to share a range of experiences." But critics say that there will be fewer common experiences. Fewer citizens will be watching the same thing: rarely will two-thirds of American TV viewers be glued to a miniseries like "Roots," as they were in 1977, and inclined to talk about race relations at the water cooler the next day.

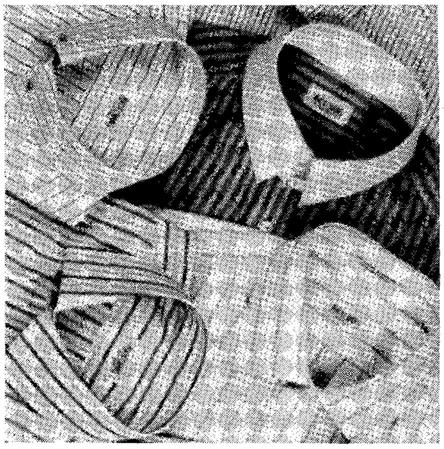
Dovrat Ben-Nahum

Critics also point out that the news can be personalized; that is, viewers can skip important news they don't want to watch. And there is the danger that executives in the business of providing news on demand will think too much of cost and too little of journalism. Increasingly, there is a tendency in the news business to confuse "coverage" with journalism. The networks substitute pictures they buy from international services and allow a correspondent in London or Washington to supply an authoritative-sounding voice-over to pictures of, say, the latest massacre in Bosnia. It saves money, but it doesn't provide what could be provided by a reporter on the scene who speaks the language, has witnessed the event, or can draw on known and reliable sources.

On the other hand, viewers can skip the Tonya Harding stories and get more in-depth news. Instead of a lowering of standards, Walter Isaacson says, the opposite can occur as television no longer requires homogenized, entertaining information for a mass audience. "On a service like this, a really good journalist who did a good piece on Sarajevo may have trouble getting it on a twenty-two-minute newscast," Isaacson says. "But we can give that person forty-five minutes, or whatever. You don't have to appeal to a mass market."

The good news is that this video democracy will empower citizens to choose what they want, when they want it. The bad news is that people may read less. Perhaps more Americans will shutter themselves indoors to watch TV, avoiding social intercourse. There may be more me, less we.

Perhaps a switched, interactive network is an invention that no one wants. The first of Thomas Edison's thousand and ninety-three patented inventions was an electric vote-recording machine to register the ayes and nays of legislators on a big board. When Edison travelled to Washington, congressional leaders told him they didn't want it. "It takes forty-five minutes to call the roll," a congressional sachem told him. "In that time, we can trade votes. Your machine would make that impossible." Or perhaps a switched, interactive network is an invention that everyone will want. There is no way to find out except to do what Time Warner is doing: build it, and hope they will come. ♦



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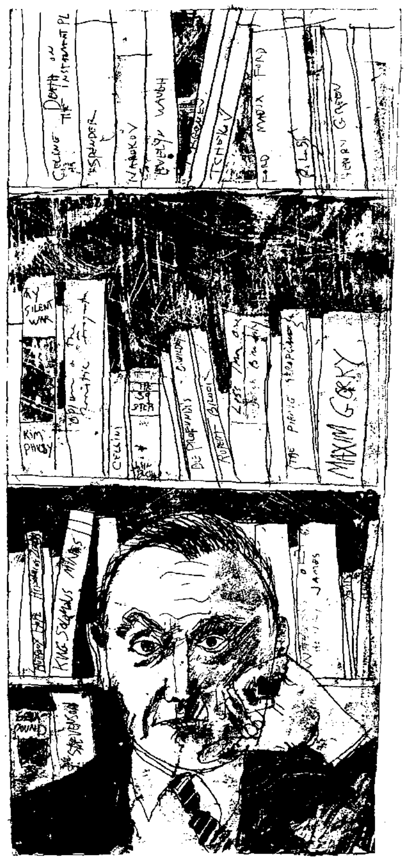
LIFE AND LETTERS

A LIFE IN THE MARGINS

Graham Greene didn't just write books; he also wrote in them—and an exclusive look at his library offers new evidence about the elusive author's life.

BY ROBERT McCRUM

GRAHAM GREENE was a writer who understood the meaning of mystery. He patrolled with impressive vigilance the perimeter fence of his privacy, while at the same time engaging fiercely with the great issues of his time. He was an elusive public presence who relished contradiction. It was said that he rarely gave interviews, yet he allowed a friend's daughter to publish a book of them. He refused to appear on British television, yet would speak, on camera, to foreign TV crews. Few writers were as watched, listened to, or talked about, yet Greene was almost invisible, especially at the height of his fame. As an addict of detective stories, he seemed to enjoy creating around his life the aura of a puzzle half solved. At his death, on April 3, 1991, he left behind, in addition to a remarkable cache of correspondence with some of the most eminent people of his generation, a final and extraordinary set of clues to his life, work, and opinions—a personal library of some three thousand volumes.



In a manner typical of the writer who transformed the thriller into literature, Graham Greene reinvented the genre "library."

ROBERT ANDREW PARKER

Among Greene scholars and aficionados, and in the antiquarian-book world at large, this archive has become an object of intense speculation. Joseph Jeffs, the retired director of the university library at Georgetown, acquired a number of Greene's manuscripts and letters during his tenure, and he is in no doubt about the archive's importance. "This collection is unique," he says. "It would be great if it could be kept intact. It would be a wonderful addition for some institution."

Many writers have left much larger collections, but what is different about Greene's library is the wealth of personal annotation, reflecting a long and crowded life of writing, politics, travel, and friendship. Scattered along the margins and jotted on the flyleaves and endpapers of these books are thousands of tiny, meticulous handwritten notes and comments: skeletal plot summaries; word counts for novels in progress; fragments of stories, films, and plays; and snippets of dialogue, many of them recorded in the course of Greene's constant wanderings. Even the world's rarest books are seldom unique. Individual manuscripts that bear the stamp of originality often fail to reflect the zigzag course of the creative process. Greene's annotated library, analyzed in conjunction with his letters and his œuvre as a whole, gives the literary detective vital clues to aspects of his life that have until now remained hidden. More than that, the library is a singular imaginative phenomenon—a window on the mind and fancy of a major twentieth-century writer, often at the very moment of inspiration. As Joseph Jeffs puts it, "the little things that interested him, he would jot them down."

The sale of the Greene library, later this spring, will attract a hullabaloo comparable to that of an Old Master auction, but with a difference. In a manner typical of the writer who transformed the thriller into literature, Greene reinvented the genre "library." And, as an extra dimension to the story, he left the sale to be conducted not by Christie's or Sotheby's but by the members of his family, who are themselves publishers and expert bibliophiles.

During the latter part of Greene's life, the typing of his letters was done by his much loved sister, Elisabeth Dennys, to whom he dedicated "The Human Factor." Greene, a scrupulous correspondent, calculated that he received approximately two hundred letters each month. He often complained to his sister about the "immense mail" he would find on his return from his travels. People would write to him for help, advice, and support, often addressing him as if he were a father confessor, not a novelist. Greene, who from 1966 on was living in Antibes, would dictate his replies and send the tapes to England, where the letters would be typed, often on pre-signed notepaper, and carbons carefully filed. In 1989, Mrs. Dennys suffered a serious stroke, losing the power of speech and movement, and her duties were taken up by her daughter Amanda Saunders. "My mother's work with him was such a personal thing," she says. "She was much more than just a secretary, and he depended on that. When she became ill, there was a real panic. What to do? That was when I stepped in. It would never be the same, but it was easier for Graham, working with me, because I knew the background. My mother had spoken to him every day, and I would also speak to him on the telephone three or four times a week."

Greene became deeply depressed after his sister's stroke. "When my mother became ill, he was devastated," Amanda says. "His own health began to fail quite soon after. They were very, very close. Even as a child, she had kept his letters." One of Greene's concerns was that his sister be well looked after for the rest of her days. It was at this time, aware that his own life was drawing to a close, that he gave his library to the Dennys family: Amanda; her sister, Louise Dennys, publisher of Knopf Canada; and their brother, Nicholas, who owns and runs the Gloucester Road Bookshop, in London. It was Greene's intention that the money raised by the sale of his books should guarantee his sister's care after he died.

Nick Dennys is a tall, gentle man of forty-three. He wears his hair pulled back in a ponytail, and he has his uncle's steady blue eyes. In anorak and running shoes, and driving a battered Ford Transit van, he has the slightly marginal appearance of an artist. As a boy, he hardly knew his Uncle Graham, but when he started a secondhand-book business, in 1979, he found that Greene, who loved to ferret about in bookshops, took a keen interest in what he was doing. "When we were children, Graham was a romantic figure, though very remote," he recalls. "Perhaps because he himself often said that if he had not been a writer he would have been a bookseller, he took an interest in me. He sold me things—proof copies, and books he was no longer using—and I found a few things for him. It was very enjoyable going to Antibes and going through his library. I remember him once finding a diary entry in one of his books, a description of this woman in a restaurant. He sat back and said, 'She and I had an adventure together.' I kick myself now that I did not ask more questions."

Nick Dennys has devoted two years to the preparation of a detailed, three-hundred-page catalogue of Greene's library, which will shortly be published in a limited edition, for prospective purchasers. It's an absorbing inventory. Greene used his books as an informal filing system, and would tuck letters, photographs, and articles relating to a particular book or writer into the relevant volumes. A note from W. H. Auden beginning "Dear Greene" reminds us of the now forgotten code of English public-school boys. Occasionally, the catalogue identifies manuscript notes on Greene's habitual French-*lycée* graph paper. And then there are the myriad annotations. As Amanda Saunders points out, it's the annotations that give the books their special value. "The books tell us much more about Graham than anything that has previously been written about him," she says. "His books were by far his most important possession."

Greene's library is all the more important because he left few other traces. Visitors to his apartment in Antibes were

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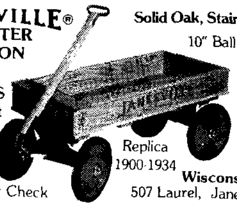

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always struck by the simplicity of his life. Louise Dennys remembers "a very pleasant modern French apartment overlooking the harbor, but not ostentatious in any way," and she adds, "The books were what counted. The books, and a few paintings that he loved, were what stood out. These were his treasures."

The Dennys family has its own ideas about who might buy this collection, but possible bidders include the British Library, Georgetown, the University of Texas at Austin, the University of Tulsa, Emory University, and a number of private collectors. Joseph Jeffs told me, "Yes, it would be a coup. I would love to see Georgetown get it." The price is likely to be high. If the library is not broken up, and is sold with the letters, estimates of its worth run close to a million pounds, maybe much more.

At the moment, Greene's books sit in a desolate storage warehouse in South London—in a seedy metropolitan landscape that would not be out of place in one of his novels. The location is a closely guarded secret. Not even Norman Sherry, Greene's official biographer, has been to the warehouse. So it was by special arrangement that I met with Nicholas Dennys one raw winter day recently and, after submitting to some security procedures, followed him down a half-lit corridor into a chilly basement storeroom. For someone who grew up reading Greene, as I did, it was an unforgettable moment. The books are arranged alphabetically on rickety wooden shelves, and in several subcategories, such as "Espionage," "Latin America," and "Vietnam." On a separate rack are first editions of Greene's own works; several broken-backed copies of the student magazine *Oxford Outlook*, in which his first serious writing appeared in print; and an exceedingly rare edition of his first published book, "Babbling April," a collection of poems.

There is nothing harder to face than the things left by the dead. To explore these volumes is, at times, like reading a letter or a diary left open on a desk. One has the eavesdropper's anxiety, and senses an invasion of privacy. I was immediately impressed by the scope and vivacity of Greene's interests: on the one hand, "Planet of the Apes"; on the other, a beautifully printed New Testament, "Sanctum Jesu Christi Evangelium," a gift from Pope Paul VI. There are books about, to name just a few subjects, art (Gauguin, Moore, Picasso), film (David O. Selznick, producer of "The Third Man"), politics (a biography of François Mitterrand and a presentation copy of General Omar Torrijos's autobiography), travel (Richard Burton, Patrick Leigh Fermor), history (Acton, Herzen, Macaulay), religion (Bunyan, Hans Küng), philosophy (Kierkegaard, Nietzsche), and psychology (Freud, Jung).

"I'm headed for the artificial butters. You?"

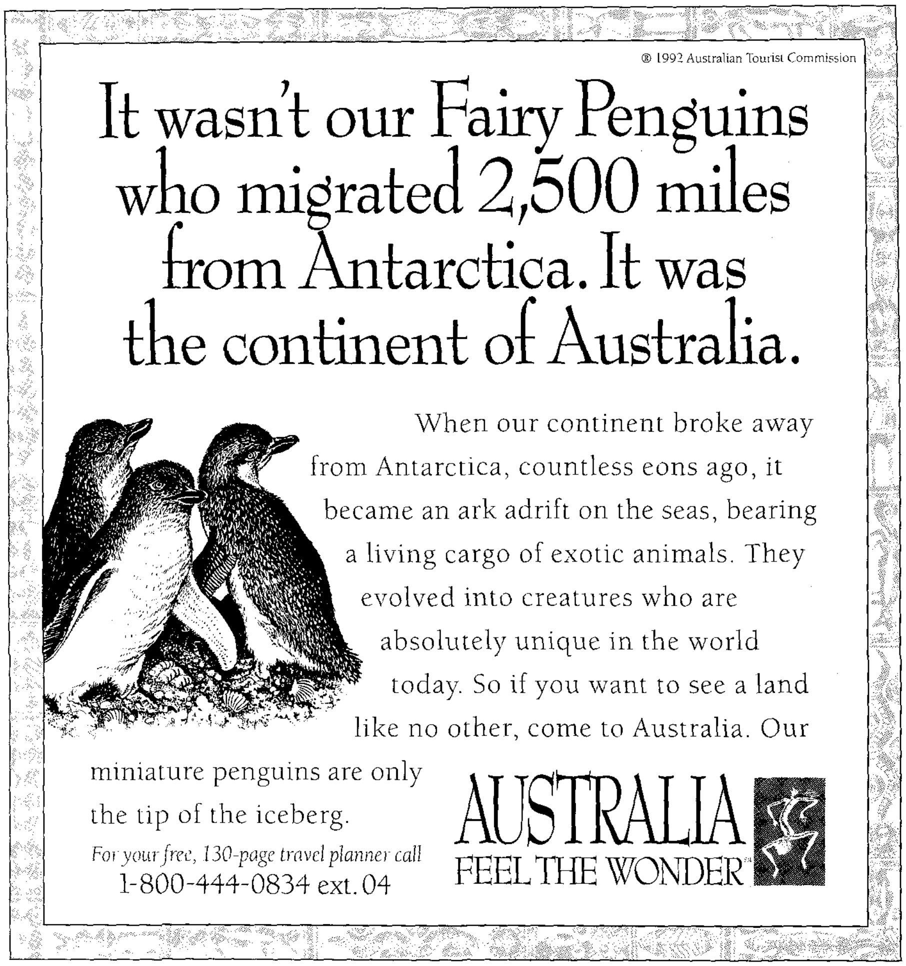
It's noticeable, too, that Greene, who was born in 1904, never lost his taste for the Edwardian writers of his school days: "King Solomon's Mines," by H. Rider Haggard; "The Prisoner of Zenda," by Anthony Hope; and "The Thirty-nine Steps," by John Buchan. In "The Pirate Aeroplane," a gaudily bound story for boys by "Captain Gilson," Greene writes, "The card-game Coon-Can in the chapter of that name for some reason haunted me over the years and was responsible for the card game at the end of 'England Made Me.' "

Greene did not buy books to read on some future rainy day. Almost all his books bear evidence of a close and animated scrutiny. As the son of a headmaster, he sometimes cannot resist giving examination grades to what he is reading—anything from an alpha-plus to a gamma. In Joseph Brodsky's "Less Than One," he sternly classifies Brodsky's essay on Auden as "unreadable." Other titles reflect more worldly tastes. In Alethea Hayter's "Opium and the Romantic Imagination" Greene writes crossly, "Not a word about the smell—like a book on wine which doesn't mention the taste." Others indicate his fascination with double lives, and with treachery and betrayal. In one of several books about the British Secret Service he stowed letters from John Cairncross, the so-called Fifth Man, and a long letter from Guy Burgess. A British edition of Kim Philby's "My Silent War" is annotated, "Missing passages inserted from US edition."

Among dozens of literary treasures I found first-class collections of Stephen Crane and Robert Louis Stevenson (a distant cousin of Greene's). On another shelf, an inscription in a presentation copy of "Nouveaux Mémoires Intérieures" from its author, François Mauriac, provides an apt summary of Greene's nature: "To a man . . . who has lived in a Romanesque world, a world both criminal and tender." Greene himself often jots down pithy critical notes. On the title page of "The Poetical Works of Rupert Brooke" he writes, "There is a place for the genuine poet of adolescence as there is for the poet of old age—Yeats, Hardy. . . ." In the "Notebooks of Henry James," inscribed to Greene from his wife, Vivien, I discovered notes for a story, "The Good Death," in which a bullied schoolboy is protected by his housemaster, who later commits suicide. In a proof copy of Truman Capote's "Music for Chameleons," Greene remarks crisply, "With all his tiresome show-off the third part is well worth reading. The trouble is—what is true and what isn't?" Even as a young man, Greene appears to have had a strong sense of his place in the literature of his century. In a valuable first edition of Auden's "Another Time" (1940), he identifies a self-descriptive quote: " 'I do not ask the wounded person how he feels. I myself become the wounded person. . . . Agonies are one of my changes of garment.' "

The picture of Greene that slowly composes itself if you browse through these shelves is of a solitary man with a lifelong taste for romantic love, a genius for friendship, and a passion for travelling in self-imposed exile. Again and again, we find him sitting alone on a plane, drinking Bols gin or listing airports he has passed through, or on a train—the Trans-Siberian Express, for instance, where he's reading the "Autobiography of Maxim Gorky" and noting his own itinerary on the flyleaf: "London-Moscow-Peking-Moscow-London-Paris. April-May 57." In "The Waterfall," by Margaret Drabble, he writes, "Flying to Helsinki 17.8.69—Coming into a new capital at night still has its spell."

There are also the countless travels of the mind. To the end of his life, Henry James and Ezra Pound were the two writers to whom Greene repeatedly returned. In his many volumes of their work we find him, by turns, admiring, reproving, inspired, and discursive, as if he felt at home in their presence. In Leon Edel's biography of James he recorded a literary anecdote that obviously pleased him: "A gathering which included James and [Hugh] Walpole. Younger writers were discussed and torn to pieces. Then Walpole unwisely left and someone asked 'What do you think of Hugh?' 'The time has not yet come,' James re-



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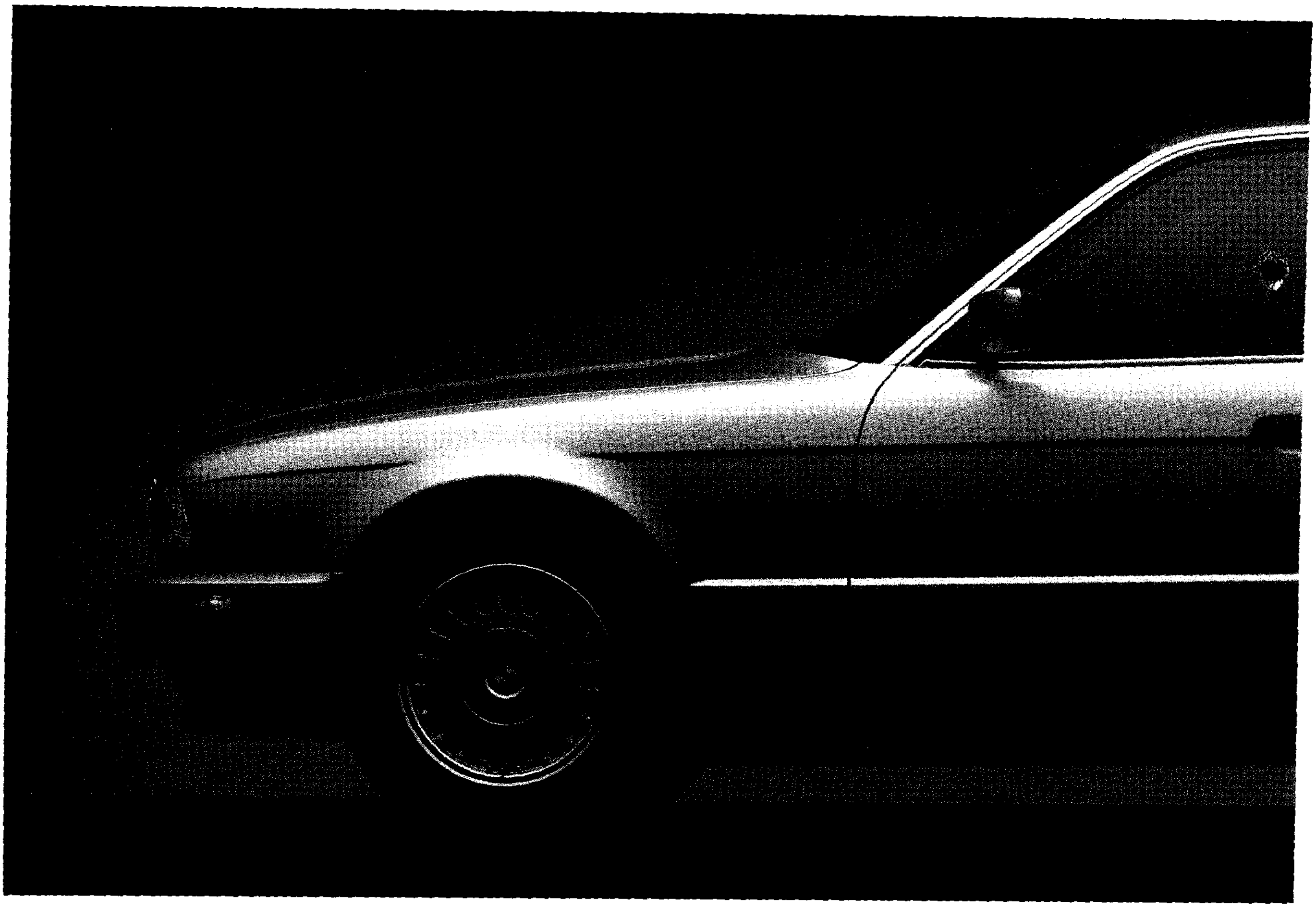

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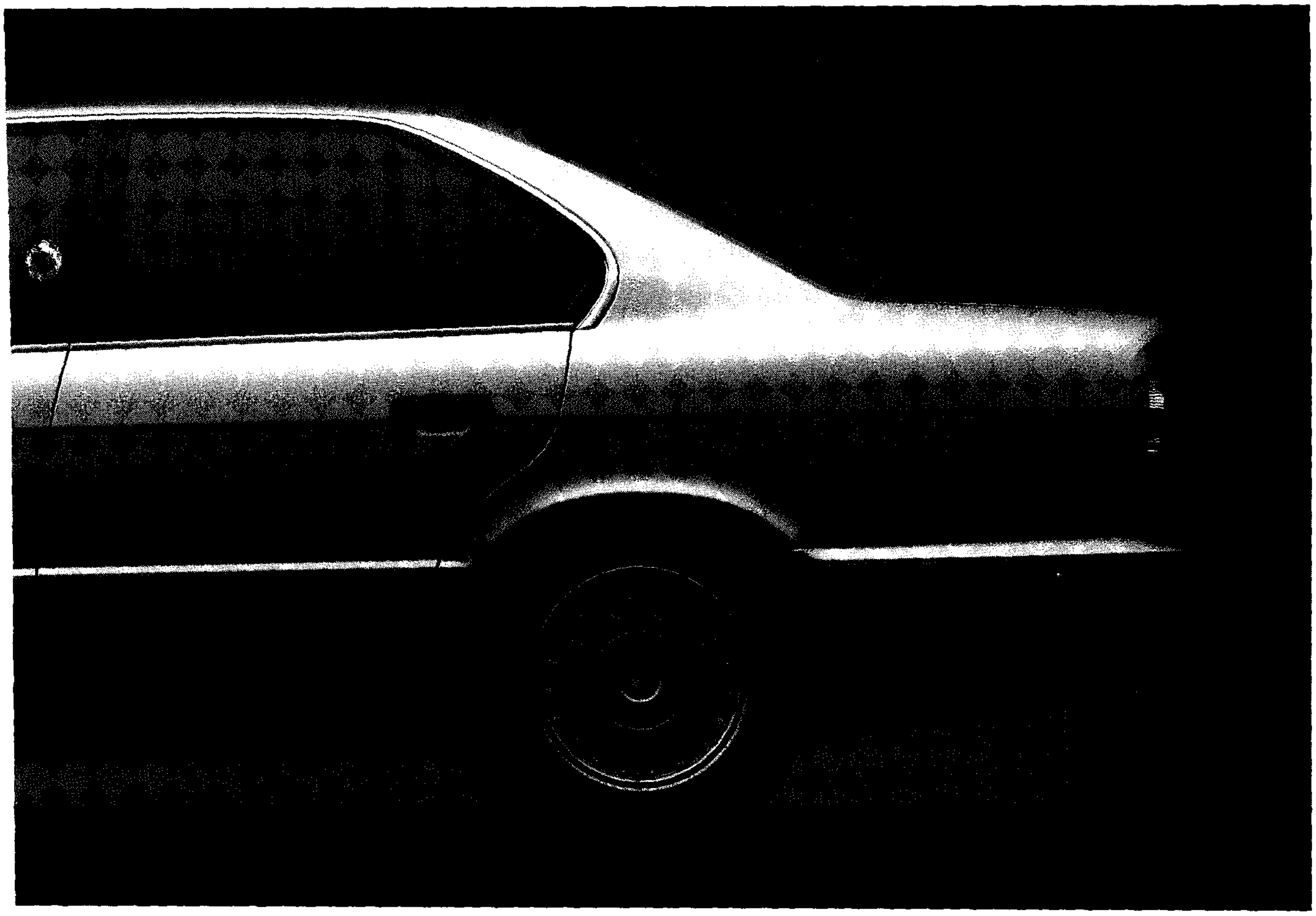

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plied, 'and it is doubtful whether it will ever come, when we need consider—poor Hughy—at all.' " Greene first read Ezra Pound's "Personae" at the age of sixteen, when he was undergoing psychoanalysis. As he grew older, he bought most of Pound's work, including a rare edition of the "Selected Poems" (1928). In his mind, Pound's writing was connected with what he sometimes referred to as his "secret garden," an area of the self that he revealed to no one—not even his closest companions. The book he asked for as he lay dying was the "Letters of Ezra Pound."

GREENE, as the family likes to stress, was an unsentimental man. His love for his books did not prevent him from writing in them at will. His custom of marking whatever he happened to be reading with the minute details of his experience was often adopted by his friends, and they sometimes gave him their own annotated books. Greene had many important relationships with women—with his wife, Vivien (from whom he eventually separated); with Yvonne Cloetta, the companion of his later years; with his sister, Elisabeth—and the habit of annotation provides many insights into the most secret love of Greene's life, his long relationship with Catherine Walston, the C to whom he dedicated "The End of the Affair."

Walston was an American and the wife of Henry Walston, an English peer. On the flyleaf of Elizabeth Bowen's history of Dublin's Shelbourne Hotel, Catherine recalls the beginning of their affair: "To Graham in January 1952. It was at the Shelbourne almost five years ago—C." The inscriptions in Catherine's gifts betray passion, devotion, and a love of mundane detail ("500 lire for Bananas!") In a copy of "Nothing," by his contemporary Henry Green, she writes, "In a thunderstorm on a train to Milan. . . . June 13th 1950." Added, in a different pen, are the words "Catherine Greene—pen name for all novels." She also seems to have acquired Greene's taste for subterfuge. In a copy of Wilde's "De Profundis" ("with love, Ritz December 2-4, 1949") she concludes a long dedication with this coded message: "1. PTMP 2. ILYB 3. SIMB 4. ROF 5. LLEOFE 6. ILY 7. IHGOOTB." Other inscriptions recall ocean nights, Armagnac on villa patios, and opium smoked in the hotels of the East. In one of Greene's volumes of Kierkegaard we find a set of Scrabble scores for C and G. A dedication, dated Christmas, 1949, in "The Life of Benvenuto Cellini" gives a tantalizing snapshot of their relationship: "How happy I was today in Cambridge buying roller skates and drinking Irish whiskey and knowing that I shall read Vol 1 of the Rosaio Press tomorrow"—a reference to the two-volume edition of Greene's poems that he published privately for his friends.

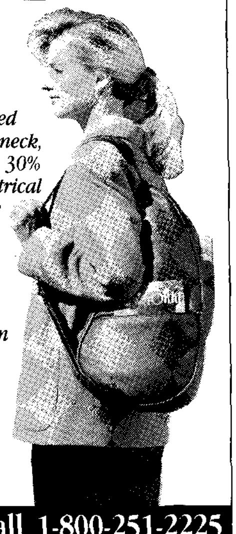
In 1951, Catherine gave Greene a copy of "The Face of Innocence," by William Sansom, "as we tied up in Salerno on Elsewhere"—Alexander Korda's yacht—"because there is nothing else to give you." Six years later, after the publication of "The Quiet American," it is another Sansom novel, "The Loving Eye," that reveals how, as the affair with Catherine came to an end, Greene began a relationship with the Swedish actress Anita Bjork. On the endpapers Greene writes, "Stockholm (Rather drunk after a solitary supper, waiting for a curtain to go down. Feb. 9, 1957). . . . Women like war, periods of waiting. Waiting while a car is late, a dentist's appointment, a curtain to fall. For everyone one has ever loved one has waited."

It was also during 1957 that Greene visited Cuba. With his unerring eye for troublemakers, he soon became friends with Fidel Castro. At the back of Céline's "Death on the Installment Plan" he describes the young revolutionary: "The public F. The private F. Not the difference of a politician. F. in public becomes private with his audience, and in private at first public. A man who is discovering things for the first time. . . . He talks but is prepared for interruption and he listens, too." On the endpapers of Frei Betto's "Fidel and Religion" he writes, "I am for Doubt and against Dogma. A doubting catholic can work easily with a doubting communist."

Greene's complex and tortured relationship with the Roman Catholic Church holds the key to many of his longest literary friendships, and his taste for danger was a bond with politicians and generals. Although he seems to have preferred to relax with history, biography, and the classics, his love of reading also sustained an eclectic interest in contemporary fiction. There are in his library several valuable first editions from, among others, Evelyn Waugh, Lawrence Durrell, Patricia Highsmith, David Lodge, Brian Moore, Vladimir Nabokov, Stephen Spender, Muriel Spark, and William Trevor.

Greene's association with Waugh dated from their Oxford days, and later blossomed into friendship. In a presentation copy of the revised edition of "Brideshead Revisited" (1960) Waugh writes, "I think it is tidier. It is certainly better printed than the original edition. . . . You have greatly elated my delinquent son [Auberon] by your kind letter about his book." In the margin of his copy of "Evelyn Waugh and His World" Greene makes several corrections of fact, and jots down scraps of personal reminiscence: "Evelyn considered that at the Sunday collection the correct minimum was the price of a cinema seat." As an example of Waugh's "friendly teasing" he cites Waugh's visit to the University of Notre Dame: "His hosts asked rather nervously what were his culinary wishes. 'Oh, something very simple,' he said, 'just a good wine and a little good cheese.' " When Waugh died, Greene wrote (in the pages of "The Makepeace Experiment," by Abram Tertz), "The best living writer & most loyal and critical friend."

Greene supported authors he admired. He was the first to recognize the importance of the Indian writer R. K. Narayan and, through his friendship with the publisher Hamish Hamilton, arranged for the publication of Narayan's first book, "Swami and Friends." Greene's copy of it bears a note from the author reading, "But for you 'Swami' should have been in the bottom of Thames now." Greene championed Vladimir Nabokov during his many difficulties over the publication of "Lolita," and his first edition is inscribed with Nabokov's gratitude for his "courageous support." He also provided financial assistance to writers during their early struggles. Copies of Muriel Spark's first books speak of "gratitude and admiration," and her later ones of "fondest love." The inscription in "The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie" refers to her "biannual offering." In a speech at Greene's memorial service Spark told how "it was typical of Graham that with the monthly check he often sent a few bottles of red wine to take the edge off cold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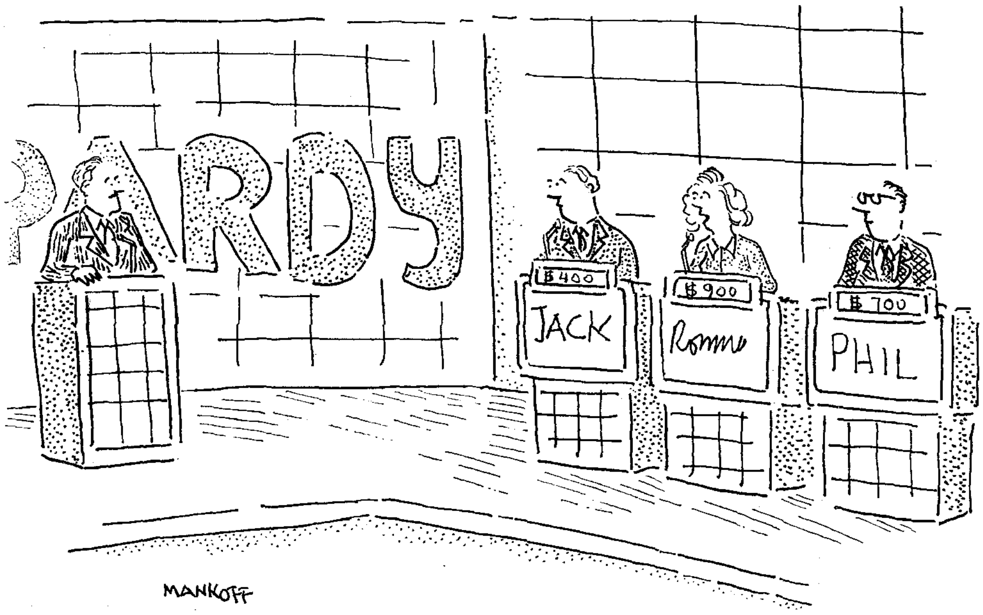

"Whitewater for two hundred, Alex."

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charity." To some Roman Catholics—Edna O'Brien, for example—he seems to have been an inspiration; to others he provided a confessional ear. Beryl Bainbridge, whose work he liked, sent him all her books. "I'm just finishing another bleeding novel," she wrote in 1989. "I think I'm beginning to hate writing. It's so difficult. P.S. I don't think my handwriting would stand up to analysis—it looks totally crackers, doesn't it?"

Many literary friendships lasted to the end; some faded; others cooled and turned to enmity. The novelist Anthony Burgess first appeared in Greene's life delivering silk shirts from a tailor in Kuala Lumpur. Burgess admired Greene and dedicated an early novel, "Devil of a State" (1961), to him. When Burgess moved to the South of France, in 1976, Greene had already been living in Antibes for ten years. Burgess, born a Catholic, could not resist making public criticisms of Greene, a convert. Nevertheless, they sustained an uneasy friendship at first. On January 29, 1980, Burgess presented a copy of his "Ernest Hemingway and His World" inscribed "with fondest regards." Greene's only annotations are question marks against two grammatical errors. Perhaps there was already a certain *froideur.* By the mid-eighties, Burgess, in the best traditions of literary feuding, was attacking Greene in print and on television. Finally, in 1988, Greene sent him a memorable rebuke. Having corrected Burgess's errors ("I know how difficult it is to avoid inaccuracies when one becomes involved in journalism"), he concludes with a magisterial dismissal: "Never mind. I admired your three earliest novels and I remember with pleasure your essay on my work in your collection Urgent Copy, your article on me last May in the Sunday Telegraph and the novel (not one of your best) which you dedicated to me." When Greene died, Burgess mounted a furious assault against his reputation and achievements—an attack that many considered more damaging to its author than to its target.

Greene had taken up residence in Antibes in 1966 to be near Yvonne Cloetta. Many of the books in his library bear the identification "Chez Félix," the within-the-ramparts restaurant where he always dined. It was his habit to take a book there in the evening, and, as on his travels, he would use the pages as notepaper. Sometimes he described what he saw. In the back of "Martin Chuzzlewit" we find:

> Two women having dinner at Felix—one has been left by her husband. The other is bored by her husband. It begins with indignation and sympathy, after the bouillabaise [sic] it becomes comedy—the physical qualities of the husbands compared—from then with the coffee and brandy. Sentiment begins.

Beneath this little sketch is a series of notes for a novel entitled "The Dissemblers," which later became "The Comedians":

> "I" always the cautious dissembler. J. invents a military prowess he wants to possess. "I" seeks in his shady way the responsibility and home he has been denied. (His winnings at local casino: he becomes the partner in the hotel: his partner, a friend of the doctor and the poet, flies and leaves him in charge.)

A few lines of plot notes later, there is one of several off-the-cuff reflections on Chuzzlewit: "Dickens at his worst writes as Pecksniff would have written had he been a moralist and not an architect. Perhaps that is why P. is his most successful evil character. He writes what he knows."

Many of the notes made at the dinner table at Chez Félix have Greene's flinty, aphoristic style. In Turgenev's "Diary of a Superfluous Man" he writes, "We exaggerate the sexual appetite in ourselves to take the place of the love we inadequately feel." In Cesare Pavese's diary, "This Business of Living," he expresses characteristic doubts about the permanence of relationships: "In late middle age"—Greene was then fifty-seven—"one becomes too conscious of repetition truly to love in a new 'affair,' but one is trapped by the fact that one is loved. It is the fact that we have gained something we don't deserve that prevents one escaping."

The thirteen volumes of "Tales of Tchehov," published by Chatto & Windus between 1921 and 1929, must have left Greene's apartment, on the Avenue Pasteur, on many occasions. These books contain hundreds of notes for "The Comedians," more than enough material for a doctoral thesis; notes for eight short stories; a plan for a "series of brothel and prostitute sketches"; notes for a play; notes for his autobiography; and notes for "The Human Factor," which he originally intended to call "The Cold Fault." In the volume entitled "The Lady with the Dog and Other Stories" Greene writes, "Perhaps the sexual life is a test: if we can survive it with charity to those we love, and those we have betrayed, we needn't worry. But jealousy, cruelty, distrust . . . we've failed. The sin is in the failure. It's the same whether one is the victim or the executioner." Another annotation, headed "Juan-les-Pins," includes a memorable Greene simile: "That English voice which is so perceptible without being raised, and which is like a saw going slowly through wood."

To the end of his life, Greene believed in the subconscious and the importance of dreams, particularly to the writer. In Volume V of "The Bodley Head Ford Madox Ford," there's a "dream note" about Greene's last novel, "The Captain and the Enemy." At the time, he was having trouble with the end of the book and was debating it with his niece Louise Dennys:

> Dec 16 87 3.30am. Dreamt of writing Captain and Enemy. Change of end. Accident. "I" killed. Never got to Valparaiso. Never comes to Martinez. "The son has followed the father." "But the father is dead." "So is the son." "Go on with the translation. The important question remains King Kong."

Greene never completed the autobiography he had begun with "A Sort of Life" (1971). He did publish, in a limited edition, "A Quick Look Behind, Footnotes to an Autobiography," which is entirely in verse. Interleaved in his copy is an additional twelve-line poem, "Rejoice," dated July 12, 1989. It begins, as all his work begins, in action, with a mood both vulnerable and sinister:

> The dead are lying in Tianmen [sic]
> Square
> and the death squads have struck
> again.

It ends, typically, in religion and doubt:

> A man was hung on a cross up there,
> innocent of any stain
> Some claim he is living still, but
> where?
> Tell me—I might rejoice.

In the absence of a more extensive personal testament, there remain his books. In a typically allusive, incomplete, and coded way, they tell us as much about their owner and his peculiar genius—his curiosity, his generosity, his love of literature, his artistic and personal constancy—as a conventional memoir. Greene once wrote that "the novelist is the victim of a passion," and his library, as a whole, brings his readers closer than ever before to an understanding of that passion. At the same time, as students of his work might expect, Greene provides no unequivocal solution to the enigmatic variations of his extraordinarily busy life. To the end, he remained original, mysterious, and slightly provisional: a library can always be dispersed. ♦

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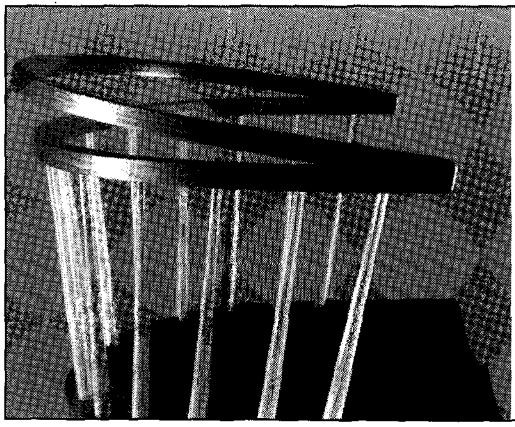
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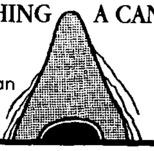
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LETTER FROM SOUTH AFRICA

THE SECRET REVOLUTION

Escalating violence has stolen the headlines, but there is a larger drama behind South Africa's upcoming elections. It began nearly a decade ago in a series of extraordinary secret talks that brought Nelson Mandela and F. W. de Klerk to the table—and it continues to unfold.

BY ALLISTER SPARKS

When violence erupted in the streets of downtown Johannesburg last week, and when a state of emergency was later declared in the Zulu homeland, it seemed to pose the question of whether the world was once again about to see a hopeful political transition reduced to ashes. There has always been the possibility—to the morally indignant, even the expectation—that South Africa's racist saga would end in a bloodbath. That may seem to be in prospect now, as Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, the putative leader of the formidable Zulu tribe, calls for a boycott of the country's first all-race election, later this month, and threatens to wage a "final struggle to the finish" with Nelson Mandela's African National Congress over Buthelezi's demand for a separate Zulu kingdom. Buthelezi has in effect linked arms with white extremists who are similarly demanding a separate Afrikaner *volkstaat*, or homeland. The rising level of violence in this conflict is aggravated by the fact that the security forces, particularly the police, are deeply suspect: a commission of inquiry produced evidence last month of a conspiracy to sabotage the transformation of the country and implicated high-ranking officers in the security forces. Does this mean that Johannesburg is to become another Sarajevo, another flashpoint of ethnic intolerance?

It may appear so. Yet to anyone who has followed events in South Africa there is outweighing evidence to the contrary. The bodies in the streets, falling conveniently before the TV cameras, convey no sense of the context of a transitional process, perhaps the most extraordinary in modern times, that has been going on below and above ground for nearly nine years. Its momentum derives both from the duration of the process and from the fact that it is internally driven, initiated and propelled by South Africans themselves, not by outside forces or foreign mediators. Opinion polls indicate that the overwhelming majority of South Africans want the transition to go ahead. The violence stems largely from the few who don't, because the shakeout of an all-race election will leave them naked, stripped of the patronage and special-interest powers that apartheid gave them. South Africa is undergoing what amounts to a revolution, albeit a negotiated one, which means that this transition is inherently an uncertain process. But what makes this revolution even more fascinating is that for much of the time it was a secret one.

When Frederik Willem de Klerk strode to the lectern in South Africa's wood-panelled Chamber of Parliament at eleven-fifteen on the morning of February 2, 1990, to open his first parliamentary session as President, everyone expected him to make a reformist statement of some kind. Talk of reforming the apartheid system had been in the air for months. After years of racial unrest, there was a clamor for political change: international pressures were on the increase, the country was under economic and diplomatic siege, the black townships were on the boil, living standards for the white minority were declining, and there was a general state of emergency. The previous President, P. W. Botha, had briefly held out the promise of reform during the early eighties but then had retreated into his irascible shell before suffering a stroke and being removed from office by his National Party. Now the Old Crocodile, as he was called, was sulking in retirement at a resort called the Wilderness, and de Klerk had taken over. At fifty-three, he was the youngest chief executive in South Africa's history, and he had just emerged from an election victory that gave him a secure five years in office. He was in a position to do something substantial.

The expectations, however, were tinged with skepticism. There had been too many letdowns in the past. When it came to reforming apartheid, the National Party had a long record of being strong on promotion and short on delivery. Time and again, pledges of reform turned out to be nothing more than the rhetoric of reformulation. Besides, the situation facing the government, while it was complicated, was not unmanageable. There was no question of an imminent overthrow of the regime. The Army and the police were still in firm control: though they could not crush the black resistance, they could repress and contain it. And though the international sanctions were painful, they, too, were survivable, and nobody imagined that there was going to be a foreign military intervention.

Moreover, reforming apartheid was an extremely difficult thing for South Africa's white minority to contemplate. It was not simply a matter of abolishing racial segregation and admitting an oppressed minority to the mainstream of society, as the United States had done. Here empowering the black majority meant that it would take over control of the country. That was the daunting prospect that had always turned reformism into Potemkinism. But de Klerk's announcement went far beyond anyone's expectations. Not even his opening line—"The general election on 6 September, 1989, placed our country irrev-

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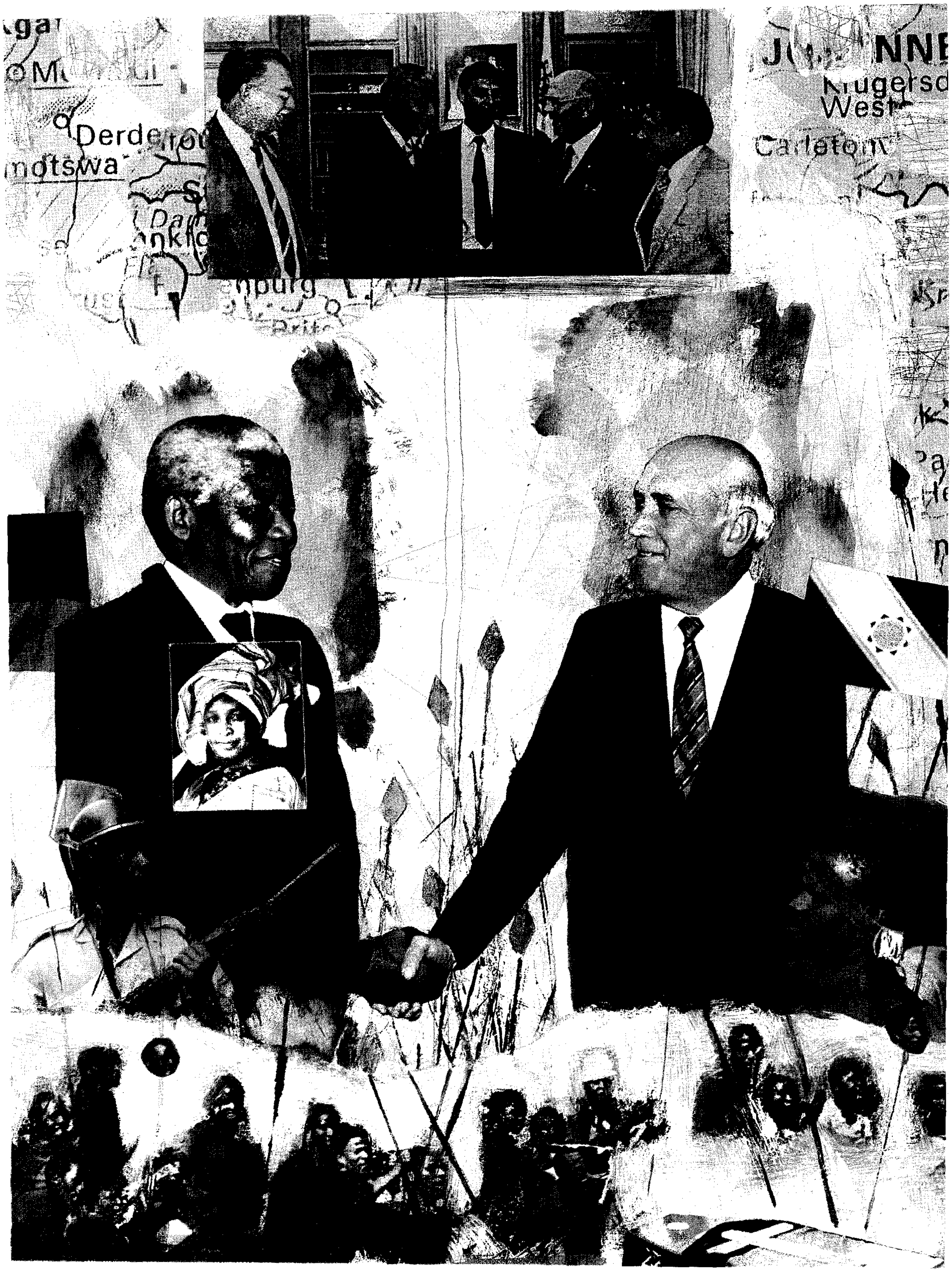
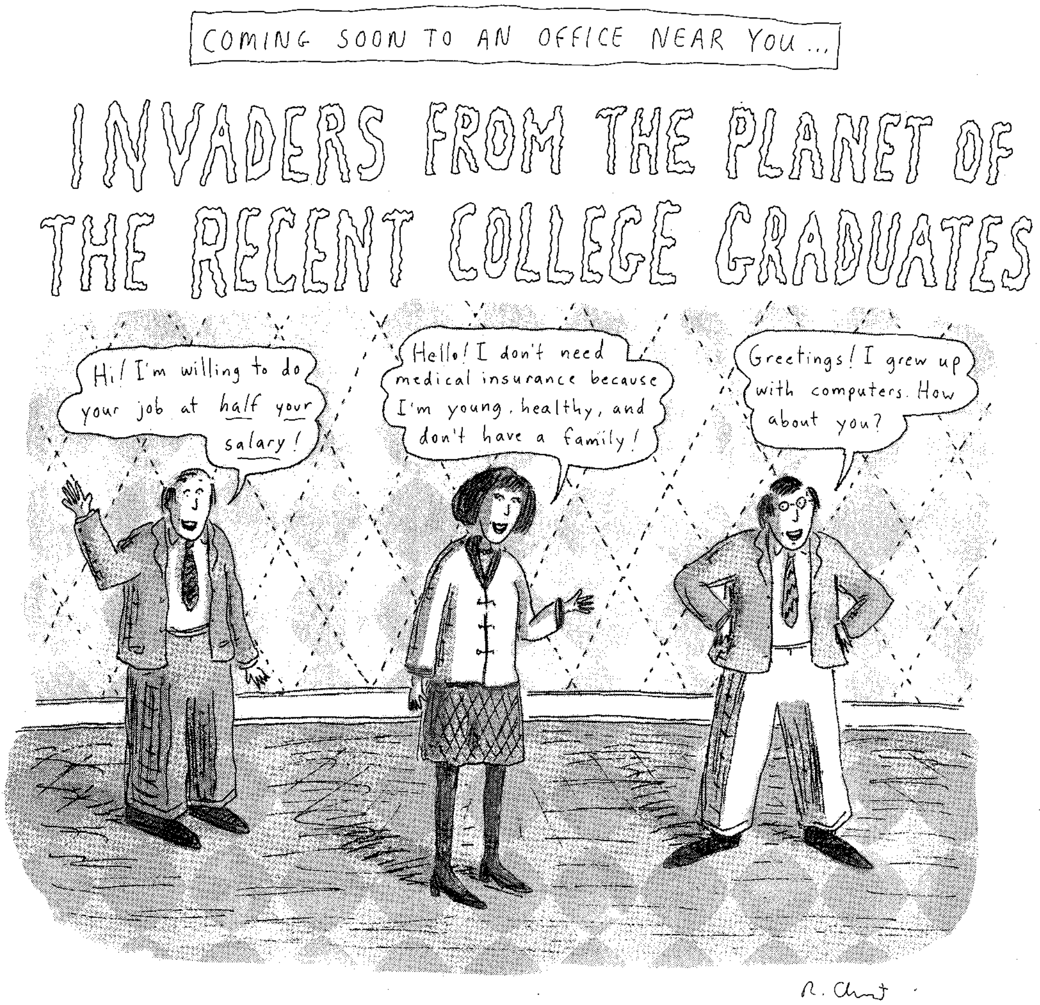


Top: Nelson Mandela with General Willie Willemse, Niel Barnard, President P. W. Botha, and Jacobus Coetsee, at the July, 1989, meeting. Center: Mandela and President F. W. de Klerk in May, 1990, three months after Mandela's release.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ocably on the road of drastic change"—prepared his audience for what was to come. The masters of doublespeak had used such language before. But thirty-five minutes later everything was drastically altered. In that time, the new President, bobbing on his right foot as he spoke, turned his country's history on its head. He demolished the old Afrikaner vision of a white South Africa, of a *volkstaat* that was theirs by divine right, and insured that in its stead there would arise a new, black-led South Africa.

For the past fifty years, especially, "the white tribe of Africa," as the three million or so Afrikaners are sometimes called, had seemed in the grip of an ethnic paranoia. They had been living at the southern tip of Africa for three and a half centuries and had come to regard themselves as indigenous. Unlike other colonial settlers, they felt they had no metropolitan home to return to. They were Afrikaners, of Africa, and if they were forced to leave for any other continent—since there could be no further retreat here, no further trek southward—they would lose their national identity and suffer a cultural death. Alongside their ethnic nationalism grew a sense of themselves as an endangered species, and the more the groundswell of decolonization swept across the world the stronger this fear became. Racial integration was equated with "national suicide."

The Afrikaners are not the only whites in South Africa. There are some five million whites in all (out of a total population of forty million), and about forty per cent of them form a catch-all category known as the "English-speaking South Africans." These include descendants of British settlers who began arriving after Britain annexed the Dutch Cape Colony, in 1795, and came in greater numbers after diamonds and gold were discovered in the interior, in the latter part of the nineteenth century, and a hodgepodge of immigrants from other parts of Europe. But it is the Afrikaners, because of their numbers and the energy derived from their survivalist imperative, who have always been the driving force in the country's white politics and who have shaped its ethos.

And it is the Afrikaners who developed the concept of apartheid, which began as a simple policy of racial oppression but was eventually elevated into an ideology of national salvation. South Africa would have to be ethnically segregated, the blacks parcelled off into tribal mini-states, called "homelands," so that the Afrikaners could remain in control of their own country and their own destiny. This became Afrikaner nationalism's credo—a civil religion. It was given theological sanction by the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa and was imposed by the ruling political movement, the National Party. For any Afrikaner to criticize it was apostasy, and to oppose it actively was to be regarded as an ethnic traitor.

Among the architects of the policy was one Jan de Klerk, who was a Cabinet minister in the National Party government that came to power in 1948, and who later became president of the Senate. Because of his role, Oom Jan (Uncle Jan), as he was called, became a revered figure in the close-knit Afrikaner community. Oom Jan's father, too, had been a prominent Nationalist politician, and was a friend of Paul Kruger, the patriarchal leader of the Afrikaner people during the thunderous years of the Boer War, at the turn of the century.

But here, on February 2, 1990, was Jan's son, Frederik Willem, seemingly destroying everything that father, family, and *volk* had ever stood for. At a single stroke, he was legalizing the whole spectrum of black-liberation organizations and their sympathizers, which had been outlawed for the past thirty years—the African National Congress; its guerrilla wing, called Spear of the Nation; the Pan-Africanist Congress; and the South African Communist Party—and at the same time announcing the impending release of Nelson Mandela, who later became the A.N.C.'s president, and hundreds of other political prisoners, and declaring his readiness to enter into negotiations with all of them to work out a new national constitution, in which everyone would enjoy equal rights.

The impact was enormous. At home, there was a mixture of trauma, exhilaration, and disbelief as different groups struggled to come to terms with a change so profound. Abroad, there was a sense of wonderment and relief. Here, so soon after Mikhail Gorbachev's perestroika revolution, was another miracle of reform. The February 2nd speech was to racism what the collapse of the Berlin Wall was to Communism. It signalled the end of the world's last racial oligarchy.

As the implications sank in, it dawned first on South Africa's neighbors and then on the larger world community that this transformation had more than just symbolic importance. Not only was a destructive factor that had destabilized and impoverished the whole of the southern African region for decades to be removed, bringing the prospect of peace and recovery to millions of people, but South Africa now had the potential of becoming an important new influence in African affairs. In effect, South Africa is a regional superpower in the world's most marginalized continent—the one country that could perhaps provide the engine to pull Africa out of its mire of poverty and desperation. And the new South Africa could also play an important role in international affairs. As Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the 1984 Nobel laureate, noted on the night last December when the 1993 Peace Prize was awarded to Mandela and de Klerk, South Africa is a microcosm of the world, embodying all the global issues of white and black, rich and poor, of developed and underdeveloped peoples. "Once we have got it right," Archbishop Tutu said, "South Africa will be the paradigm for the rest of the world."

But none of this was in de Klerk's mind when he delivered his February 2nd speech. He was motivated by very different concerns, and, like Gorbachev, had an entirely different outcome in mind when he embarked on his perestroika. In speeches he delivered after February, he made it clear that he was as strongly opposed as ever to majority rule. "Don't expect me to negotiate myself out of power," he told a Western diplomat. Instead, there had to be a system of "power-sharing"—a concept that de Klerk explained as government by consensus among the leaders of the various racial groups. In Party congresses that followed, a plan was discussed that would, in effect, give the black majority the power to draft and pass legislation, and the white minority the power to veto it.

But in freeing the black leaders and legalizing black politics de Klerk had already let the genie out of the bottle. The huge black constituency could now be mobilized and bring pressure to bear on all these issues by means of mass demonstrations and strikes. Suddenly, the white government found that it could no longer determine the future on its own. De Klerk's commitment to negotiation meant he had to begin making compromises. The black leaders attacked the power-sharing plan as a fraud, which would give the illusion of majority rule but in fact freeze apartheid's inequalities. Analysts mocked it as a "loser keeps all" plan. Gradually, it was whittled down. The final agreement, arrived at in November, 1993, is for a temporary "government of national unity." This will be a coalition of all political parties that win more than five per cent of the vote in the forthcoming general election, which is to be held over three days, from April 26th to April 28th, with each party awarded Cabinet seats in proportion to its strength. The leader of the majority party will become President. The Cabinet will rule by majority vote, but with some attempt at consensus. The government of national unity will rule until the next general election, which is due in 1999. During those five years, de Klerk will almost certainly still have a place in the government, but after 1999 the coalition agreement will fall away and there will be full majority rule. De Klerk will then go down in history as one of the few political leaders who have indeed negotiated themselves out of power.

SOUTH AFRICA'S negotiated revolution could be said at one level to have begun on a tennis court on the campus of the University of the Orange Free State. For that is where a friendship began, in the nineteen-fifties, between Jacobus Coetsee, who later became Minister of Justice, Police, and Prisons, and a fellow student named Pieter de Waal. De Waal, tall and lean, played a strong serve-and-volley game; Coetsee, shorter and speedier, was one of those tireless retrievers who dart about the court getting everything back and waiting for their opponents to make mistakes. De Waal usually won, and in later years went on to be selected to play for his province. "But I picked up a few sets sometimes," Coetsee says today. The two were neighbors, and as their friendship grew de Waal persuaded Coetsee to abandon his plans to become a teacher, and take a law degree instead. And when Coetsee graduated, in 1954, de Waal got him his first job, in the law firm of Louis Medallie, in the provincial capital of Bloemfontein. "Medallie asked me if I knew where he could find a good Boer lad to take on as an articled clerk, and I introduced him to Kobie," de Waal recalls, using the nickname by which Coetsee is generally known. De Waal, meanwhile, had decided to become a small-town lawyer, and had moved to the little farming *dorp* of Brandfort, out on the wide, open Orange Free State plains, thirty-six miles from Bloemfontein. Some years later, Coetsee bought a farm in the Brandfort district, and after he went to Parliament, in 1968, as the National Party M.P. for Bloemfontein West, he telephoned de Waal from time to time to ask him to arrange for the purchase of fodder and other farming supplies. The old tennis partnership continued.

Fortuitously, it was to Brandfort that, in 1977, James Kruger, the Minister of Justice, Police, and Prisons, chose to banish Winnie Mandela, the wife of the A.N.C. leader, when she became too troublesome for the authorities to handle in the aftermath of the 1976 Soweto riots. Brandfort was remote but also reasonably accessible to the regional security headquarters in Bloemfontein, so that an intensive, round-the-clock watch could be kept on Mrs. Mandela without undue cost or inconvenience. It was fortuitous, too, that Winnie struck up a friendship with de Waal's wife, Adele, and their daughter, Sonia. And it was fortuitous once again when Coetsee, in 1980, replaced Kruger as Minister of Justice, Police, and Prisons.

Through most of the eighties Winnie Mandela was a hero, a living martyr to the black-liberation cause, and, despite the discomforts inflicted on her by her persecutors, she revelled in the role. Her vivid personality dominated the little town of Brandfort. At first, she shocked the conservative Afrikaner townsfolk, long accustomed to subservient blacks who lowered their eyes and called whites "baas," by striding through the streets dressed like a queen, in dazzling African gowns. She kept them waiting while she used "their" public telephone at the post office. She marched into the local liquor store and ordered exotic things like champagne and Cinzano. She pointedly ignored the separate entrances and segregation signs, and tried on clothes in the town's only dress shop.

Piet de Waal was initially reluctant to have anything to do with the dangerous newcomer, but then the Mandelas' Johannesburg lawyer, Ismail Ayob, telephoned him to warn him that, since he was the only lawyer in Brandfort, and her restriction order did not allow her to leave the town, he would be obliged to handle her legal business.

"I was worried that I would have the security police around my neck," de Waal confesses today. He wrote to Kobie Coetsee, asking his advice. "My good old pal," he wrote, in Afrikaans. "I am the only lawyer in town. What must I do?"

Coetsee advised him to go ahead and handle her legal affairs. "Better that than have the overseas press say she couldn't get a lawyer," he wrote. To save de Waal from harassment, Coetsee also wrote a letter to Kruger, telling him that he had known de Waal "for a lifetime" and that his integrity was "above all suspicion." No need to worry about his associating with Winnie Mandela.

In the event, Mrs. Mandela began visiting the de Waals' home. She went for legal consultations and she went for social meetings. Her restriction order prohibited her from being in the company of more than one person at a time, and, with the police watching her house through binoculars from a nearby hillock, the lawyer's house was the only place where she could safely talk with a group. But, more and more, Mrs. Mandela went just to see Adele. The two became firm friends, developing what de Waal today calls "a remarkable relationship." Winnie called Adele "my white sister," and wept when she died, in a car crash, in 1990.

"She became a friend of mine also," de Waal says. "It began at a professional level, but I also got to know her as a person. I learned quite a few things from knowing her, and I came to understand her point of view."

When, in October, 1980, Coetsee succeeded Kruger as Minister of Justice, Police, and Prisons, de Waal began to lobby him cautiously—first to ease the ban on Winnie, and then to consider releasing Mandela himself. This effort was the first direct lobbying of a Cabinet minister on the subject by anyone within the Afrikaner-nationalist fold, and Coetsee admits today that it had a considerable influence on him. "You could say that's where the whole process started," he says. "I trusted Piet."

"Whenever Kobie phoned about matters to do with his farm, he would ask, 'How are things going with your client?' " de Waal recalls. "I would give him a report on what she was doing, but then, gradually, I found openings to tell him I thought the government should reconsider its attitude toward the Mandelas." Knowing the sensitivity of the subject, de Waal phrased his points carefully. "I would say, 'Look, man, this banning order is achieving nothing. If she wants to say inflammatory things, they still get reported overseas anyway, so what's the point?' " Patiently, persistently, he also encouraged his friend to make contact with Nelson Mandela.

COETSEE got his opportunity when Mandela developed an enlarged prostate gland and, in November, 1985, was admitted to the Volks Hospital, in Cape Town, for surgery. As it happened, on the day before the operation, Coetsee and Winnie Mandela boarded the same South African Airways flight for Cape Town. Coetsee stopped by her seat, in the economy section of the plane, and spoke to her, assuring her of the government's concern for Nelson's health. Later, with typical audacity, she strode through to the first-class section and sat down beside the minister. They talked throughout the two-hour flight. By the time the plane landed, Coetsee had decided to visit Mandela in the hospital.

In the five years since he took over from Kruger, the new minister had been working quietly on prison reform. Mandela recalls that in 1964, when he was sent to Robben Island—South Africa's Alcatraz, six miles offshore from Cape Town—he and other political prisoners were treated as the lowest of the low. They had the fewest privileges—no newspapers, radio, or contact visits—and they had little chance of ever

PRIMROSE

All winter the dark earth's counsel kept you
straitened, dumb, in the illegal fire escape
flower box; calyx, stamen, sap, bud, once

and for all and at once tucked in, spirit-flower
posthumously transferred from a florist's tub.
July, November, the strongbox snow discarded,

your sudden face marries the sun to itself,
an orphan Persephone, who pulls herself hand
over hand from fire to fire, spring's last ember

the first conflagration of the earth returned,
the Primus stove lit, then out, then lit again
is her burning crown under the blue smoke of the trees.

—CYNTHIA ZARIN

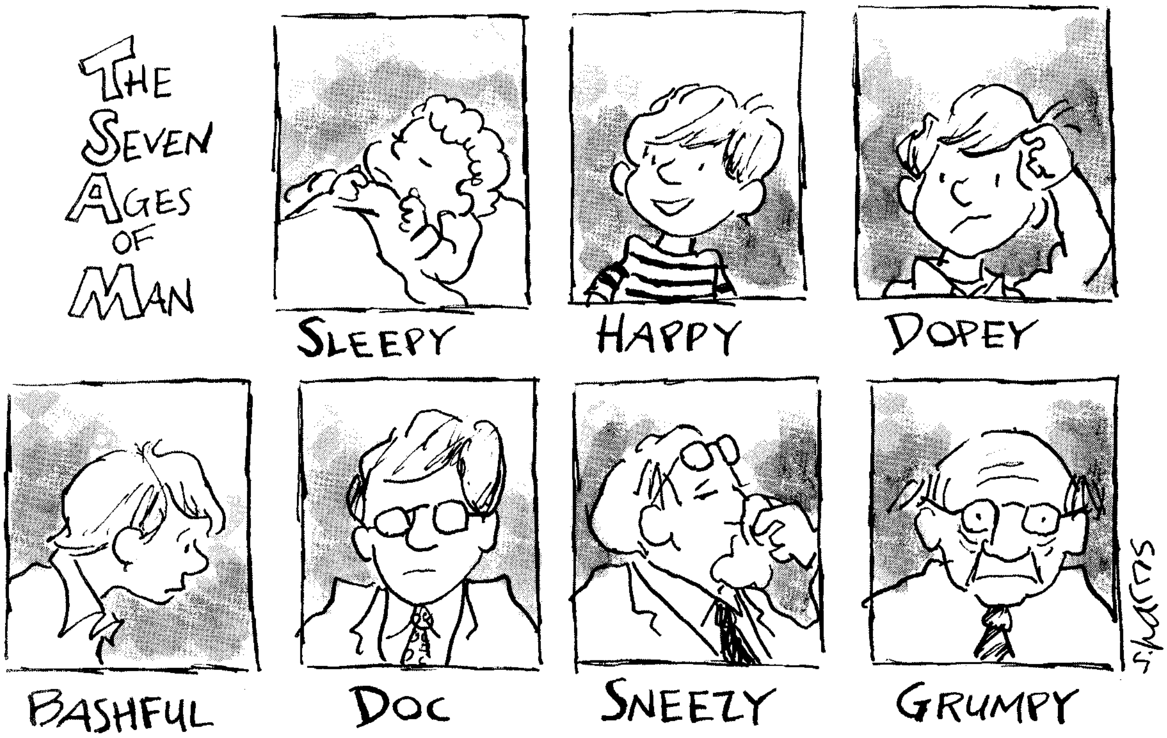
improving their condition. They were put to work on the windswept island, crushing granite and digging lime. The warders abused them routinely. Mandela himself was never maltreated—his strong personality seemed to restrain even the worst warders—but he recalls how his colleagues were often beaten with whips and batons, and how on one boiling-hot day a prisoner was buried up to his neck on the beach and when he cried out for water a warder urinated into his mouth.

Some of the A.N.C. "politicals," including Mandela, had been on Robben Island for sixteen years when Coetsee became minister, and he allowed them newspapers and access to radio and television for the first time. Until then, political prisoners did not qualify for parole or remission of sentence: life imprisonment—the sentence that Mandela and other members of the A.N.C. leadership had received—literally meant imprisonment for life. After lobbying his Cabinet colleagues, Coetsee eventually secured a minor policy relaxation that allowed a measure of discretion in granting remission. "I was convinced that Mandela and his colleagues would have to be released sometime, and that they should be prepared for that," Coetsee said in an interview.

In March, 1982, as foreign pressures for their release mounted, Mandela and four other top A.N.C. leaders—Walter Sisulu, Ahmed Kathrada, Raymond Mhlaba, and Andrew Mlangeni—had suddenly been transferred to the Pollsmoor maximum-security prison near Cape Town. They were placed in a large communal cell on the roof, cut off from the four thousand other prisoners jailed there. They were also cut off from the hundreds of politicals still on the island. The move was puzzling, and led to speculation that the authorities wanted to end the enormous influence that their most famous prisoner had on the stream of young black activists who continually passed through what they dubbed "Mandela University." Coetsee denies this. He says that the idea was to enable the government to make discreet contact with the imprisoned leaders—something that could not have been done on the island without raising a storm of speculation.

Throughout this period, Mandela had been lobbying on his own. When the country fell once more into a state of turmoil, in the mid-eighties, he decided that the time was right for the A.N.C. to take the initiative in trying to open a dialogue with the government which might lead to negotiations. He wanted to set up a meeting with President Botha, and had written to Coetsee asking the minister to come and see him in the prison. Coetsee had not responded, but now the opportunity arose for him to see Mandela in the hospital. "Some intuition told me I shouldn't see Mr. Mandela behind bars," he explains—as always, at pains to accord his former prisoner the appellation "Mr." "I don't know why. I just had this feeling that that was the way I had to do it. Now I have known him only as a free man, not as a prisoner, and I wanted that to remain in his mind as well."

Coetsee remembers the meeting vividly. "If I close my eyes, I can see it all now," he says. The whole third floor of the hospital had been sealed off, for security reasons. Mandela was the sole patient there, with two nursing sisters and his surgeon the only other people allowed on the floor. As Coetsee walked into his ward, together with Lieutenant General Willie Willemse, the commissioner of prisons, Prisoner No. 466/64 rose from his chair and greeted his jailers like old friends. "It was quite incredible," Coetsee recalls. "He acted as though we had known each other for years and this was the umpteenth time we had met. He introduced General Willemse and me to the two nurses, and chided me for not coming to see him sooner. I remember he made a little joke about this being his ward and me being his warder. He took complete command of the situation. He was like the host. He invited us to sit down, and asked, 'General Willemse, are you comfortable?' and 'Is there anything we can do for you?' I had read a lot about him—all his speeches and all these reports that came across my desk every day—and I was fascinated at what kind of man he must be to have attracted all this international attention and had all these honorary degrees and awards given to him. But when I met him I immediately understood why. He came across as a man of Old World val-



ues. I have studied Latin and Roman culture, and I remember thinking, This is a man to whom I could apply it—an old Roman citizen, one with *dignitas, gravitas, honestas, simplicitas*."

Although the two men got on well, it was a wary occasion, with more hints than substance in the conversation. Mandela sensed a change in the atmosphere from previous meetings he had had with government officials, including the overbearing Kruger. He later told me in an interview, "Coetsee is a different type of fellow. He was very polite, and although we didn't discuss politics, it was clear that he was putting out feelers. But he was very subtle about it. At one point, he said to me, 'I am interested in your being put in a situation between prison and freedom.' I asked him whether he meant my whole group of prisoners, and he said no, just me. I was worried about that, because it would look as though there was a deal, but I didn't say anything about it to him. All I said was, 'Well, your coming here cuts down our problems by twenty-five per cent.' "

When Mandela left the Volks Hospital, on November 23rd, the commanding officer at Pollsmoor, Brigadier Fred Munro, met him with the news that he would not be rejoining his colleagues on the roof. Instead, he was to be given a cell in the prison hospital, on the ground floor. Again there was the worry that the others would think he had made a deal. Mandela asked Munro why he was being separated from the others, but the prison commander said he didn't know—those were the orders from the head office.

Mandela asked for and was granted permission to meet with his colleagues. "Look, chaps," he said. "I don't think we should fight this, because, whether they have it in mind or not, it will open an opportunity for us to make an approach to the government about a meeting between them and the A.N.C."

That was what Mandela had always had in mind. In 1961, a year after the African National Congress was outlawed, he had written to Hendrik Verwoerd, the chief architect of apartheid, who was then Prime Minister, appealing to him to call a national convention, at which all South Africans would be represented, to draw up a new nonracial and democratic constitution. Only when Verwoerd failed to reply to that letter did the A.N.C. decide to abandon nonviolent methods and form a military wing. But Mandela, as he now admits, never had any illusions that the black South Africans could win a military victory. The aim of the armed struggle was to focus attention on the resistance movement; he knew that black liberation could be achieved only through negotiation. So getting to see the government had always been a primary objective. But he knew, too, that popular attitudes on both sides would make this difficult. "I knew it would be opposed by our own people as well as those on the government side," he told me. "I would have to adopt a strategy that would enable me to confront people with a fait accompli. I was convinced that was the only way." Confidentiality was as essential for Mandela as it was for Coetsee. "I hope you understand now what was going on," Coetsee says. "In a sense, this is material for le Carré."

Mandela was moved into a pale-green cell, eighteen feet by twenty-four and comfortably furnished, with a private bathroom next door and a second cell, across a hallway, equipped as a gymnasium, with an exercise bike. By South African prison standards, this was unheard-of luxury. "It was clear to me they wanted to talk," Mandela says. "I didn't think they were about to release me. I thought they just wanted to have me in a convenient place to talk to me."

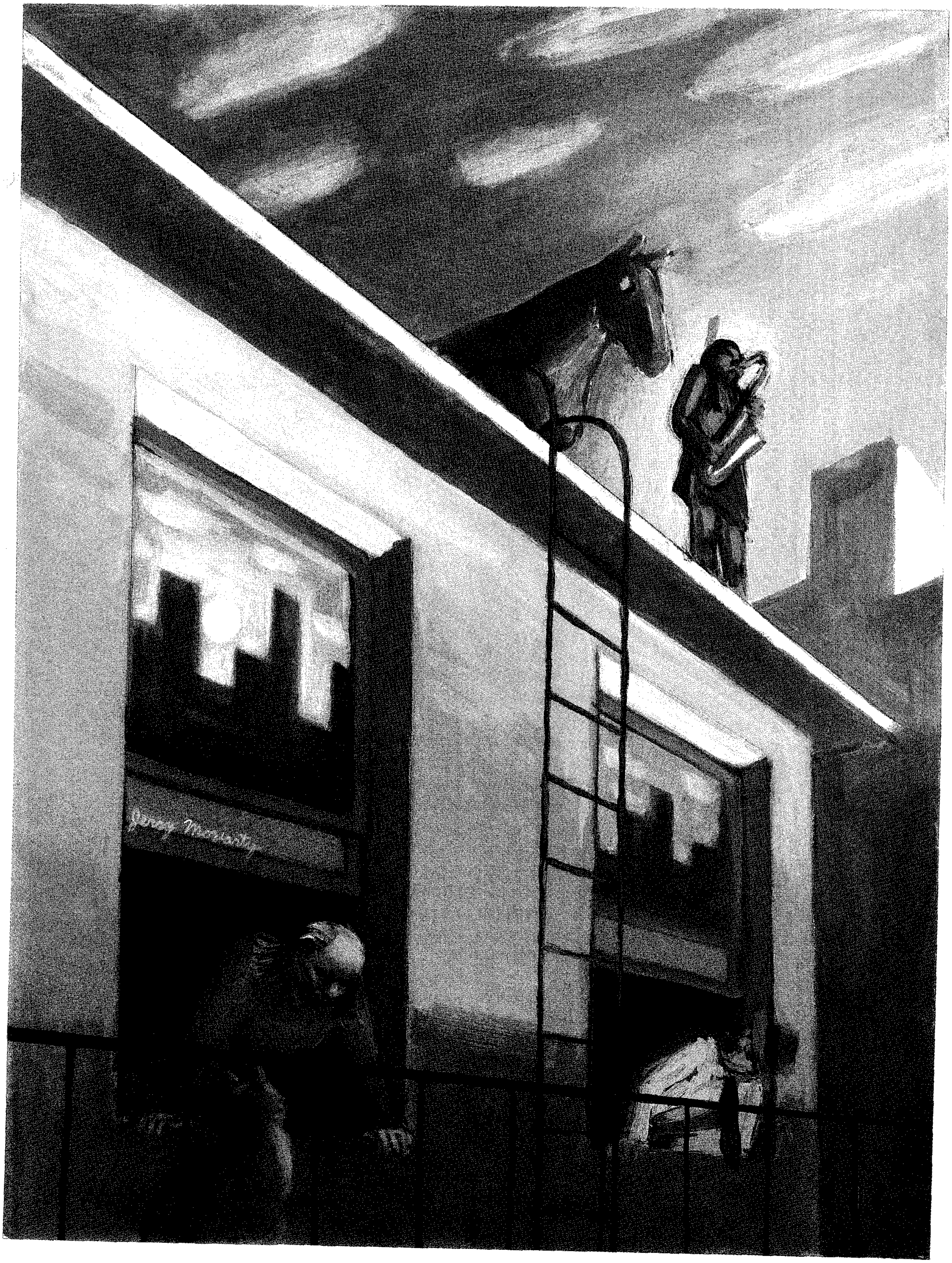
That was indeed the reason. Coetsee had reported to President Botha on his visit to Mandela in the hospital, and Botha had told him to keep in touch with the prisoner. According to Coetsee, Botha wanted to find a way to release Mandela but was in a bind: on the one hand, he wanted to show Western leaders who were putting pressure on him that he was not inflexible, and, on the other hand, he did not want to appear weak. "P.W. was not a man for concessions," Coetsee says. "He never wanted to show any sign of weakness."

The result was a drawn-out process of talking. It began slowly. Coetsee followed up his meeting with Winnie Mandela on the plane by inviting her to his official residence, called Savernake. When they met there, he told her he wanted to allow her to return to her home in Johannesburg and asked her not to let him down by behaving in too extreme a fashion if he did so. For Mrs. Mandela, that was asking too much. She gave no pledge, and when she did return to Johannesburg, in 1985, she began the most controversial phase of her life. She surrounded herself with a group of young toughs who masqueraded as a soccer team but were in fact a private gang who guarded her and did her bidding. As the gang became increasingly thuggish, Mrs. Mandela's star waned in the black community. In 1988, the gang kidnapped a group of teen-age boys, beat them, and murdered one, a fourteen-year-old named Stompie Moeketsi Seipei. The leader of the gang, Jerry Richardson, was sentenced to death for the murder, and Mrs. Mandela was sentenced to six years' imprisonment, reduced to a ten-thousand-dollar fine on appeal, for being implicated in the kidnapping. This and other wayward behavior strained her marriage after her husband's release from prison, and in 1992 the couple announced their separation. But all that lay in the future.

There were several more meetings with Nelson Mandela, too—and, again, Coetsee was at pains not to see him in the prison. Fred Munro, the commanding officer of Pollsmoor, drove Mandela in a gray Audi through Cape Town's oak-lined avenues to Savernake, a splendid old Cape Dutch mansion, just eight miles from Pollsmoor but light-years away in style of accommodation. There, in a deep-cushioned sitting room, they talked, and the jailer offered his prisoner canapés and his first drink in twenty-two years, a sherry, medium cream—a drop of nectar that Mandela says he savors to this day. But, as Mandela had anticipated, the talks were not getting discernibly closer to the prisoners' release.

An event that Mandela regards as crucial occurred that same year. A summit meeting of the British Commonwealth nations, in Nassau in October, 1985, was deadlocked over whether to join the international sanctions campaign against South Africa, which had been forced to withdraw from the Commonwealth in 1961 because of apartheid. The Third World member countries were all for sanctions, but Margaret Thatcher was strongly opposed, and without Britain, South Africa's main trading partner, Commonwealth sanctions would not mean much. Eventually, a compromise was reached whereby a group of "eminent persons" would visit South Africa to study the prospects for

SPRING IN THE CITY


Jerry Moriarty

change and would report to the next Commonwealth summit.

A seven-member Eminent Persons Group arrived in South Africa early in 1986, under the co-chairmanship of Malcolm Fraser, a former Australian Prime Minister, and General Olusegun Obasanjo, the former military ruler of Nigeria, who had handed over his country to civilian rule in 1979. Shuttling between Pretoria and Pollsmoor Prison and the A.N.C.'s exile headquarters in Lusaka, Zambia, the group began a round of talks with the white regime and the outlawed black-liberation movement. After some hesitation, the Botha government granted permission for Obasanjo to meet with Mandela on February 21st, and then it allowed the whole group to see him in March and again in May.

The meetings with Mandela took place in a guesthouse on the prison grounds, and the government went to some lengths to make an impression: the prison tailor was summoned to take Mandela's measurements, and he was given a new pin-striped suit—"It fitted like a glove," Mandela says—and also a shirt, a tie, shoes, and underwear. Coetsee was there at the start of the second meeting, but he did not stay, even though Mandela invited him to. "I wanted him to feel that he was in charge, that he was the host," the minister explains.

The Eminent Persons Group reported later that it had found Mandela "reasonable and conciliatory"—that he had emphasized his commitment to racial reconciliation and "pledged himself anew to work for a multiracial society in which all would have a secure place." During its visit, the group drew up a "possible negotiating concept," which envisaged the release of political prisoners, the lifting of the ban on the A.N.C. and other black organizations, the suspension of the A.N.C.'s armed struggle and of governmental violence, and the start of all-party negotiations—almost exactly what de Klerk was to announce four years later. But that was too much for the hawks in South Africa's military-security establishment. On the morning the Eminent Persons Group was due to meet with a number of Cabinet ministers, the government ordered a series of commando and air raids on supposed A.N.C. bases in Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Botswana. Outraged at such provocation, the Eminent Persons Group left South Africa that night.

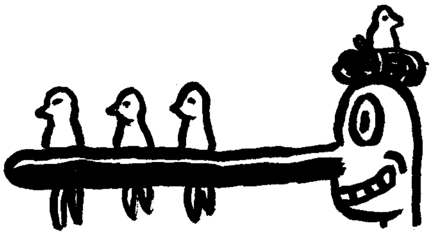
Mandela was not discouraged, for the Commonwealth group had found that there was a widespread desire among ordinary South Africans for a negotiated settlement and enough potential common ground to get negotiations going. He wrote to the commander of Pollsmoor requesting a meeting with General Willemse.

"I wrote the letter on a Wednesday, and on Sunday Willemse came down from Pretoria to see me," Mandela recalls. "I said, 'Look, I want to see P. W. Botha. I want a meeting between the A.N.C. and the government.' And of course the gate to P. W. Botha was Coetsee. 'Well,' Willemse said, 'it so happens Minister Coetsee is in town. I'll phone him and see if you can go and see him.' "

Another trip to Savernake followed, during which Coetsee promised to speak to the President. Botha did not respond directly, but his interest was aroused. He instructed Coetsee to probe Mandela's attitudes more closely and report back to him, but not to breathe a word to other members of the Cabinet. Coetsee stepped up his meetings with Mandela, and in May, 1988, he formed a special committee to broaden the discussions. The committee met frequently for long, detailed discussions with Mandela. A note in his diary records forty-seven meetings in all.

Thus, for four years before the rest of the world knew anything about it South Africa's future was being discussed in a series of secret meetings in hospitals, prisons, and a Cabinet minister's home. At the same time, government officials, slowly and carefully, began getting Mandela ready for possible release, taking their top-security prisoner for drives into the countryside to accustom him to a world from which he had been cut off for a quarter of a century.

ON one of these excursions, which began shortly after his return from the hospital, Mandela experienced one of the most bizarre moments of his long imprisonment. The deputy commanding officer of the prison, Lieutenant Colonel Gawie Marx, had taken him for a drive around Cape Town, showing him the sights, and as they were on their way back Marx pulled up at a shopping center. He asked Mandela if he would like a Coke, then jumped out of the car and disappeared into a café. "He just left me there, sitting alone in the car," Mandela recalls. "It was a very disturbing situation. There I was, I'd been in prison for twenty-two years, and I didn't know whether I was going to find myself running away. It was so new, so unexpected. I wasn't sure what I was going to do." He did not, of course, do anything. Whatever else Mandela may be, he is not impulsive. But the incident revealed how emotionally upsetting it is for a long-term prisoner to be tantalized with a glimpse of freedom.



The prison officials took him out almost every weekend, around the streets and suburbs of Cape Town. "What we had in mind was to expose him to the realities of the outside world, to prepare him for release," Coetsee says.

For the young warders, too, the excursions were a pleasant change from the prison. Several formed warm relations with the man they were driving around, and sometimes they became a little daring in what they did with him. Christo Brand, who was just twenty-five at the time, recalls taking Mandela walking on Cape Town's Sea Point beach one evening, and even taking him to his own apartment to meet his family, after which Mandela sent Christmas cards to Brand's small children. "Life's not the same without the politicals here," Brand says today. "The ordinary criminal prisoners are not nearly so interesting."

All the while, the discussions with Coetsee's committee were continuing, and Mandela was pressing the minister for a meeting with President Botha. Mandela had written to Botha, and in early August of 1988 he received word that the President might see him before the end of the month. Then Mandela fell ill. On August 12th, he was taken to Cape Town's Tygerberg Hospital, where the doctors diagnosed tuberculosis. He would have to have an operation to remove fluid from his lungs, followed by a long convalescence.

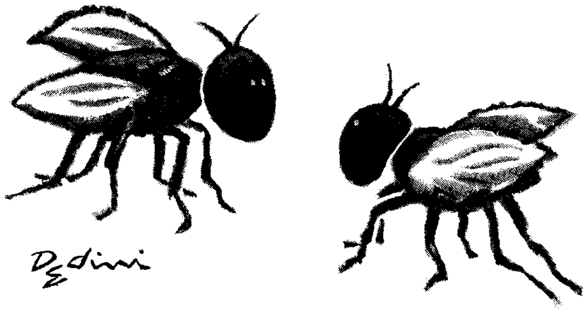
"Gee whiz! You know, that just destroyed me, because all my concentration now was on these talks," Mandela says. However, the years of prison regimen and work in the quarries had toughened him, and he recovered more quickly than the doctors had expected. By the end of September, he was able to leave the hospital, and was taken to a private clinic in Cape Town, where the talks resumed. Then, in December, he was transferred to the Victor Verster Prison, outside the town of Paarl, thirty-six miles from Cape Town, and was put up in a comfortable house on the prison grounds.

After that, the excursions into the countryside became even more wide-ranging. Mandela was taken to Paarl and the neighboring towns of Stellenbosch and Wellington. He was taken for walks about the streets of Paarl, too, accompanied by prison warders and security officers in civilian clothing. Though he was the world's most famous political prisoner and a living icon to his people, he had been out of public view for so long that no one any longer knew what he looked like.

"Once, we stopped at a petrol station to fill up, down near the foreshore in Cape Town, and I got out of the car and spoke to the pump attendants," Mandela recalls. "I made a mistake by greeting them in the African way and it caused quite a commotion. They seemed to realize this was somebody. I think they may have recognized me."

As the meetings with Coetsee's committee intensified, Mandela was also allowed visitors. For the first time, outsiders came to see him, and he could ask for fellow-prisoners to be brought from Pollsmoor and Robben Island. Prison-service chefs cooked for him, and warders waited on him and his guests at table. The house became a veritable negotiation center. As the talks progressed through the end of 1988, the ground was slowly prepared once again for a meeting with Botha. And again the word came through that the President might be prepared to see Mandela soon. Then, in January, 1989, Botha suffered a stroke.

As the pall of another delay settled over Mandela and the committee of officials, they kept up their meetings. Mandela's talks with Coetsee and, increasingly, with others in positions of authority had been going on through the dark years of the most prolonged and intensive black uprising in South Africa's history, which began in September, 1984, and was still shaking the country to its foundations, despite Botha's attempts to clamp down on it with states of emergency and with a savage use of force. More than four thousand people had been killed and fifty thousand detained without trial; international sanctions were being applied; and the rand had crashed. Mandela wanted to negotiate further, but he could not get beyond these secret talks.



"All day, every day—'There's a goddam fly in here!' It's so hurtful."

What was discussed over all those years was a narrow band of issues that, had the political will been there, could have been resolved in a fraction of the time. But Botha was hesitant and remained under the influence of his military-security establishment. So the meetings tracked over the same old ground, session after session, waiting for some decisiveness at the top. Niel Barnard, the National Intelligence Service chief, whom Mandela regarded as the key figure in the talks, had a brief to sound Mandela out on three issues: Was he prepared to accept that violence was not the way to solve South Africa's political problems? What was his attitude toward Communism, given the A.N.C.'s long-standing alliance with the South African Communist Party? And did he still insist on majority rule, or was he prepared to settle for something less? Mandela, for his part, was single-minded in wanting a meeting with President Botha to discuss with him the possibility of a negotiated settlement. In addition, he wanted to press the government to release his fellow-prisoners in the leadership group who were also serving life sentences—especially Walter Sisulu, who was now deep in his seventies. Not once did he raise the question of his own release.

Botha's obsession with not appearing weak was the main stumbling block. He kept searching for some formula for conditional release, but Mandela, too, had an iron will, and remained resolute. Back in January of 1985, Botha had made an offer that thereafter only complicated the issue: he would release Mandela if he would "unconditionally reject violence as a political instrument"—in other words, renounce his 1961 decision to go over to an armed struggle after the A.N.C. was banned. "P.W. told us he thought this was a brilliant solution," Coetsee says, "because if Mandela refused, then the whole world would understand why the South African government could not release him."

But Coetsee argued against the plan. "I had studied the man, and I knew he would never accept this," he says. "There was no way Mandela was going to renounce the A.N.C.'s armed struggle, for which he had spent all those years in prison. We had to put it in a positive way, asking him to commit himself to a future peaceful process rather than asking him to renounce the past."

The deal was also one-sided. There was nothing in it for the A.N.C. After years in exile, during which the organization had built up a high international profile, the A.N.C. would be unlikely to sacrifice its strongest bargaining chip for nothing more than Mandela's personal freedom. "I warned that the A.N.C. would decline the offer and that we would be painting ourselves into a corner," Coetsee says. He got support from Louis le Grange, the Minister of Law and Order, who, though a hawk, had also taken the measure of the man. But the rest of the Cabinet opposed them, backing Botha.

"We argued right up to the last minute," Coetsee recalls. "He was going to make the announcement in Parliament, and he had his speech already prepared, but le Grange and I worked on an alternative draft of the last few pages. We followed the President right into the parliamentary chamber and stood with him for a moment behind the Speaker's chair. He had his speech in one hand and our text in the other. He hesitated, then, slapping his text, said, 'No, this one carries the support of the Cabinet.' "

As Botha walked to his bench, le Grange cursed under his breath. "Go ahead and fuck it up then," he muttered.

The response was as Coetsee had feared. Winnie Mandela flew to Cape Town with the family's lawyer, Ismail Ayob, to get Mandela's reply. The following Sunday, February 10, 1985, a huge rally was held in Soweto's Jabulani Stadium to pay tribute to Archbishop Desmond Tutu for winning the Nobel Peace Prize. Mandela's daughter Zindzi, aged twenty-four, who was then the only family member not silenced by a banning order, mounted the platform and read her father's statement. "I cherish my own freedom dearly, but I care even more for your freedom," the statement went. "I am not less life-loving than you are. But I cannot sell my birthright, nor am I prepared to sell the birthright of the people to be free. I am in prison as the representative of the people and of your organization, the African National Congress, which was banned. What freedom am I being offered while the organization of the people remains banned?" The statement concluded, "Only free men can negotiate. Prisoners cannot enter into contracts." As Mandela's daughter's voice rang out, the crowd erupted in a wild display of cheering and chanting. These were the first words anyone had heard from Mandela since his final address to the court that imprisoned him, twenty-one years before, and if ever the government had doubted the durability of his stature in the black community it could do so no longer.

NYNEX
CALLER ID PROFILE
EGBERT J. QUILP
BORN JAN. 9, 1949,
IN ARMONK, N.Y.
CRASHING BORE
Handelsman

The trouble was that Botha was now stuck with the demand that Mandela had to renounce violence before he could be released. Any withdrawal of that demand would make Botha look weak. And so the talks dragged on inconclusively. The only benefit to come from Botha's bungled release offer was that it increased Coetsee's credibility as an adviser. Botha was never one to admit a mistake, but it became clear from 1985 on that he and various members of his Cabinet were more and more inclined to heed what the Justice Minister had to say. Gradually, Coetsee was able to bring them around to accepting a new formula that would get over the difficulty of requiring Mandela to renounce violence. He would be asked to commit himself only to "positive development," without having to renounce anything. Coetsee knew from his discussions with the prisoner that he would agree to this.

Meanwhile, in the house at Victor Verster, Mandela was carefully putting his own thoughts together and trying as best he could to consult with his A.N.C. colleagues. He was unhappy about acting on his own, but the circumstances left him little choice, and he was growing increasingly concerned about the mounting conflict in the country and the deepening racial polarization that could result. He was worried, too, that the authorities might establish a second line of communication with the A.N.C. and that the two might be at cross-purposes.

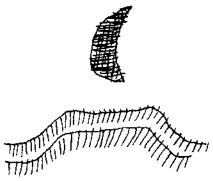
Mandela badgered the prison authorities and managed to get them to fax messages back and forth between him and the prisoners at Pollsmoor and on Robben Island. He also got permission to make telephone calls to Alfred Nzo, the A.N.C. secretary-general, in Lusaka. So a rudimentary system of consultation was established, which enabled Mandela to prepare an eleven-page memorandum, setting out his position on the issues that Coetsee and the committee had raised, and urging a meeting between the government and the A.N.C. as a first step toward reaching a negotiated settlement on the country's future. He was characteristically forthright. The A.N.C. had a long history of campaigning peacefully for political rights, he wrote, but when the government made that illegal the black organization had the right to take up arms in defense of their freedom against an oppressive and morally repugnant system of government. "Africans as well as Afrikaners were, at one time or another, compelled to take up arms against British imperialism," he added, in a telling passage that went to the heart of Afrikaner-nationalist pride. There was no way, therefore, that the A.N.C. was going to abandon its armed struggle until the government showed a willingness to give up its monopoly of political power and negotiate directly with the country's real black leaders.

Mandela was equally blunt about Communism. The A.N.C. was not Communist, he declared in the memorandum, but the South African Communist Party had supported its struggle against racism since the early twenties, through long lean years when it had no other allies, and the A.N.C. was not the kind of organization to dump its friends. "Which man of honour will ever desert a lifelong friend at the instance of a common opponent and still retain a measure of credibility among his people?" he asked.

As for majority rule, he said, it was a pillar of democracy worldwide. It was the right thing for whites, but when black South Africans demanded it they were told that it would be a disaster—that if they wanted political rights they would have to find some other formula. "White South Africa simply has to accept that there will never be peace and stability in this country until the principle is fully applied," Mandela wrote.

Yet he was also conciliatory. In any negotiating process, he said, two fundamental issues would have to be reconciled: the black demand for majority rule and white concerns stemming from this demand. Attention would have to be given to structural guarantees insuring that majority rule did not mean black domination of the white minority. "Such reconciliation will be achieved only if both parties are willing to compromise," he added.

Mandela concluded the memorandum by suggesting a two-stage process. First, the government and the A.N.C. should meet to work out what could be done to create a proper climate for negotiations, and then the negotiations themselves could take place.



Mandela sent the memorandum to Botha in March, 1989, after the President had recovered from the stroke. Here, for the first time since Prime Minister Verwoerd spurned Mandela's letter asking for a national convention twenty-eight years before, was a concrete A.N.C. offer to negotiate a peaceful settlement of the South African conflict, reversing the organization's commitment to the revolutionary overthrow of white-minority rule. A week later, Mandela received word that Botha was ready to see him.

It was Coetsee and Niel Barnard, the director-general of the National Intelligence Service, who prevailed on the Old Crocodile to agree to the meeting. "I spent an hour with him telling him there was no way he could lose out if he saw Mandela," Barnard recalls. " 'If the meeting goes wrong and jumps the tracks, and all that,' I said, 'you will still be remembered as the one who tried to keep things moving forward toward a solution. But if it goes well it will be the beginning of South Africa's settlement politics, and history will acknowledge that.' "

As South Africa's equivalent of the chief of the C.I.A., Barnard was the key organizer of the meeting, which was scheduled to take place on the evening of July 5, 1989. Rumor and speculation were the main concerns. Botha was fearful of political repercussions in his own constituency if word of the meeting leaked out. "I had to smuggle Mandela into Tuynhuys past the security police," Barnard says, referring to the President's official residence in Cape Town.

That in itself was risky. "They came to ask me my blood group, in case there was a shoot-out and I got injured and had to have a transfusion," Mandela recalls. And again, there was concern that he should look smart. Again, a new suit was purchased, and a new shirt and tie and shoes.

"They told me to be ready by six o'clock," Mandela recalls. "I was. But when they saw me they said, 'Your shirt is creased.' I said, 'But, hey, it's new, it's just out of the shop.' But there were these folds that you get in a new shirt, and they said that's not good enough. I had to take it off and let them iron it. Then, when I put it on again, one of the senior prison officers said my tie was badly tied, so he tied it again."

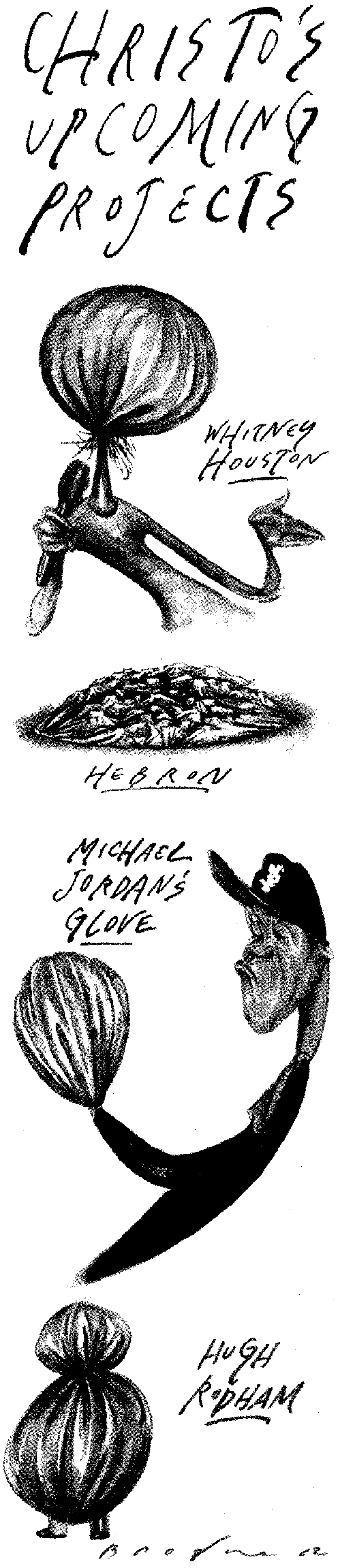
They drove in a small convoy to Tuynhuys and parked in an underground garage beneath the official residence. An elevator took them up to the ground floor. They stepped out and walked to the door of the President's office. As they were about to enter, Niel Barnard glanced down, and noticed that Mandela's shoelaces were undone. During all his years in prison, Mandela had worn loafers, and he had forgotten how to tie shoelaces properly. So the chief of the National Intelligence Service got down on his knees and tied the prisoner's shoelaces outside the President's door.

"It shows how scared they were of President Botha," Mandela says today. "Everything had to be just right."

As it turned out, the meeting between these two iron-willed men was surprisingly serene. Barnard and Coetsee were worried that Botha's famous temper, worsened by his recent illness, would erupt in the face of Mandela's forthrightness. They had urged both men to avoid controversial issues and to keep the meeting at the bland level of an ice-breaking courtesy visit.

"I was tense," Mandela says. "I thought I was going to meet this finger-wagging man I had heard described and I didn't know how I might react. But when I entered the room he came in from the opposite side and walked toward me with his hand outstretched. That was the way the whole thing went. He was charming, and the conversation was very warm."

It was inconclusive, though—a cour-



tesy meeting with no substantive discussions and no subsequent decisions. Mandela went back to prison, and the waiting game resumed. Yet in some subtle way a line had been crossed. As Coetsee says, after that there was no way of stopping the process. It was just a matter of time, and of the man.

THE change of man proved difficult and unedifying. P. W. Botha, always a difficult person, with an explosive temper, had grown more irascible and authoritarian with the years, and he became worse after his stroke. He was also becoming more reluctant to press ahead with his earlier reformism. He had started a process but was failing to follow through. Some insiders say that this was largely owing to the influence on him of the military-security establishment: the hawkish "securocrats" were obsessed with what they saw as a Communist threat against South Africa, and they reinforced Botha's reluctance to show any sign of weakness. "Although they recognized the need for reform, they didn't find it easy to make the actual crossing over the Rubicon," Barnard says. "They were like an army milling around in front of the bridge."

Botha kept stalling at critical moments, but meanwhile contacts with the A.N.C. were widening. Barnard's National Intelligence Service, which was more positively reformist than the Military Intelligence Department, held several meetings with exiled A.N.C. leaders. So did key members of the Afrikaner Broederbond, the Afrikaners' own secret brotherhood, which was a powerful inner body of the ruling white tribe's political intelligentsia. It had played a pivotal role in directing the Afrikaner-nationalist movement from its earliest years and, starting in the late seventies, had become the main agency for trying to find a way out of the Afrikaner's historic dilemma: how to abandon apartheid and come to terms with the black majority without losing control of the country. Pieter de Lange, who had taken over as chairman of the Broederbond in 1983, after a bitter power struggle with conservatives, had his first contact with members of the A.N.C. at a Ford Foundation conference in Long Island in 1986. He had invited Thabo Mbeki, then the A.N.C.'s director of information and publicity and most polished diplomat, back to his hotel for dinner, and the two had talked for hours. "At the end of the evening, Thabo asked me what message I had for him to take back to his leader," de Lange recalls. "I told him that South Africa was getting ready for the changes that were necessary, and that the Afrikaner would insist on retaining his cultural identity and the necessary instruments to do so—language, education, religious freedom. I think he was quite surprised and pleased."

Other contacts followed, including four three-day meetings of senior Broederbonders and top A.N.C. members in Britain between 1987 and 1989. De Lange spoke regularly with Botha, conveying the message that the black organization was more moderate than they had realized, and that "the stereotypes that had been established on both sides were starting to break down with the contacts."

But Botha continued to stall. De Lange recalls that a National Party parliamentarian called on him to suggest that the Broederbond and a group of reformist National Party M.P.s join together to force the President's hand. De Lange refused, but he gave a glimpse of his own frustrations when he told a regional meeting of the brotherhood that he didn't believe political change could come about "until the personalities change at the top."

The coup, when it came, was partly of Botha's own making. In February, 1989, Botha unexpectedly announced his resignation as leader of the National Party, but retained his position as President. This created an unprecedented constitutional situation: the South African system, inherited from Britain, provides for the leader of the strongest political party to be the head of government. For the two roles to be separated meant detaching the chief executive from his political power base.

Though Botha never fully explained his reasons for resigning the Party leadership, he apparently wanted to elevate himself "above politics" in order to head a national forum of selected ethnic leaders that would discuss how he might give blacks their own segregated place in the central government. The plan was plainly a non-starter, because it spurned all the bridge-building taking place with the A.N.C., but by his unorthodox constitutional move the President had exposed his flank to the growing forces of frustration in his administration. A general election, excluding blacks, was due in September, and the National Party faced the embarrassment of going into it under a leader who had no power. That and Botha's health provided the pretext for de Klerk, who had been elected by the National Party to replace Botha as Party leader, to make his move.

On the morning of August 14th, de Klerk led a group of ministers to Tuynhuys to confront the President. It was the first time in the country's history that the members of a Cabinet had met with their chief to tell him to go, and it was not a pretty scene, as a copy of the Cabinet minutes leaked to a South African newpaper reveals. Botha listened quietly at first as they paid their tributes, told him what a great leader he had been, and how much they admired what he had done for *volk* and fatherland. They went on to say how, out of concern for his health and for the welfare of the country and the Party, they felt that it would be best if he would take a break and appoint an acting President—at least until after the election. One by one, the ministers asked him to go, among them the Minister of Defense, General Magnus Malan, who had been Botha's protégé and friend for twenty-three years. "I wish I could bypass this day," Malan lamented, but in the circumstances, he said, he had to support the others.

Botha erupted, lashing out. "So," he said, "you regard me as a superman, do you? If I'm so wonderful, such a superman as you describe, why are you treating me like this?"

"Your health, Mr. President," de Klerk began.

Botha turned on him. "Yes," he snarled. "That is the coward's way. What you are implying is that I can't think for myself. Why don't you come out and say so?"

"That's not what I said," de Klerk protested.

"Why not?" Botha demanded. "Why do you insinuate it with a smile on your face and a dagger in your hand?"

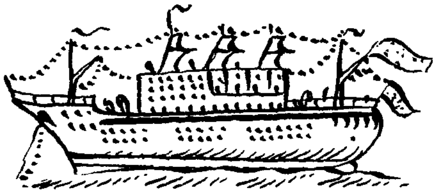
"Mr. President, that's not what I'm insinuating," de Klerk protested again.

But there was no calming the angry chief. "Look, you'll go too far," he thundered. "I am fit. Is any one of you in possession of a medical certificate that proclaims you to be healthy? Let me hear, how many of you are sitting here with pills in your pockets while you drag my health into this matter? Oh, so that is your new stunt, your new propaganda: he's not compos mentis!"

Botha railed on, telling his ministers he still had the right to fire them all, calling them hypocrites, saying that they were weak and useless, that they were no good on television, that they came across too apologetically, not as fighters, and that they were letting the Party down. He also accused them of "playing with the A.N.C." He refused to appoint an acting President but said he would resign that night after going on national television to tell his people why. Then he stood up, glared around the room, and said, "Thank you, gentlemen. Goodbye."

Botha did go on television that night to announce his resignation and state his case, but the broadcast turned out to be a long, rambling bluster that left viewers confused. They didn't know what it was all about, except that the Old Crocodile was angry. De Klerk was appointed acting President the next day, and a new era began.

DE KLERK, the party conservative, had had little to do with the Mandela issue when he became President. Indeed, as he confessed in a recent interview, it was not until some time in 1988—he does not remember exactly when—that he became aware of the secret negotiations with Mandela. They had been taking place for three years without his knowledge. The reason, he explains, is that the issue did not fall within his ministerial authority, and Botha was keeping knowledge of the secret meetings restricted to those directly involved. "I was not part of the inner circle dealing with security—in fact, I was never part of any inner circle of Mr. P. W. Botha's," de Klerk says. It was in his capacity as leader of the Party in Transvaal province that he eventually learned of the prison meetings. "When I found out about them, I was fully supportive," he says, insisting a little disingenuously that he was not as conservative as he appeared. "I was often troubled in my own mind, and it became more and more difficult for me as a loyal Party spokesman in a leading position to defend a policy which increasingly I believed had to go."



De Klerk strongly denies that he underwent any Damascus-like conversion. It was not a question of morality, he says, but one of practical politics. Nor was his conversion a personal matter; it was part of a gradual realization in the National Party that apartheid was unworkable and had to be changed. In fact, de Klerk still refuses to apologize for apartheid. It began, he insists, as "an honorable vision of justice"—one that would allow separate development for white South Africans and the various black racial groups. Only when it proved to be unworkable did it become unjust, he says, "and when we realized that we changed it."

Whenever his own outlook changed, he had certainly concealed it from those closest to him. His image among his Cabinet colleagues had been that of a conservative. In 1982, when the hardliner Andries Treurnicht broke away from the National Party in reaction against Botha's proposed reforms, de Klerk had been the natural choice to take over as Transvaal leader, to counter Treurnicht's new Conservative Party in its stronghold there. Leon Wessels, the current Minister of Manpower and one of the government's key constitutional negotiators, has a framed newspaper cartoon hanging in his office that shows de Klerk resisting Botha's abolition, in 1985, of the most notorious of all the apartheid laws—the Immorality Act, which made sex across the color line a crime. It is a reminder that a mere four years before he took over the leadership of the country this acclaimed reformer was still supporting not only the grand vision of territorial separation but also the meanest aspects of social segregation.

As late as March, 1989, a month after de Klerk succeeded Botha as National Party leader, his older brother, Willem, known as Wimpie, warned in a magazine article that F.W. was unlikely to turn sharply to the left. "He is too strongly convinced that racial grouping is the only truth, way and life," Wimpie de Klerk wrote. "He is too dismissive of a more radical style." The course his younger brother would follow, Wimpie predicted, was a careful, centrist one, hoping to "hold the middle ground by means of clever footwork, small compromises, drawn-out studies and planned processes, effective diplomacy, and growing authority through balanced leadership and control." That was "his style, his nature, his talent and his conviction." There would be no leap of faith in a liberal direction.

When, and why, did de Klerk change his colors? The evidence suggests that his claim to have changed with the Party is at least partly true. He was, above all, a party-liner, and the explanation he offers today for his earlier conservative image is that as the Transvaal leader he had to consolidate the Party's conservative support in that province. "It was my job," he said in the interview. "My speeches were focussed on my main opposition."

When, in 1986, the National Party accepted the principle of "a single South Africa," de Klerk accepted that, too. But Leon Wessels believes that the full implications of the decision—that it meant abandoning apartheid's core concept of territorial division—made more of an impact on de Klerk than on most other members of the Party. De Klerk himself says of that event, "Once we had gone through the process of reassessment, I took a leap in my own mind, more decisively than many other National Party politicians, that power-sharing with blacks was the right course for a new political dispensation."

From that point on, there occurred what Wimpie calls "an evolutionary conversion." Others agree. No one among F.W.'s closest colleagues and friends was aware of any blinding moment of change, yet imperceptibly, incrementally, he shifted a hundred and eighty degrees. "He's still the same person I've always known," de Klerk's closest friend and his old law-firm partner, Ignatius Vorster, says, yet he confesses to being puzzled about exactly how the transformation occurred. "My guess is that at some stage—I don't know when—he realized that if you go on like this you are going to lose the game, the cup, the league, everything," Vorster, who is now the dean of the law faculty at Potchefstroom University, says. "He is a pragmatist, who carries very little ideological baggage with him, and once he had reached that decision he acted. Then his strategic sense took over. As a lawyer, F.W. always had a great sense of timing. If he had been a rugby player, he would have been an excellent fly half"—the equivalent of a quarterback in American football.

Wimpie de Klerk, who has discussed the matter at length with his brother, believes that there were several other important phases in the evolutionary conversion. The first was when de Klerk had to campaign against Treurnicht's hard-liners in the conservative heartland. "Listening to their arguments, their ideologies, their stubbornness, he realized it was a matter of racism rather than identity," Wimpie says. "He reacted against that, and I believe it was the beginning of an estrangement between F.W. and the conservative part of the National Party."

As the provincial leader, de Klerk also became involved in a policy think tank headed by Chris Heunis, the Minister of Constitutional Development. For the first time, de Klerk was confronted with the problem of how to accommodate the black majority in the political system. Heunis's think-tankers, many of them young Afrikaner academics, were grappling with the fact that the policy of parcelling the black population off into ten tribal ministates had been stymied by the refusal of six homelands to accept nominal independence. In addition, black people were continuing to stream to the industrial cities, despite stringent control laws, and thus the black population in what was officially classified as "white" South Africa was swelling ineluctably. The dream of total racial separation was clearly unattainable, and, with township unrest on the

REALISM

We are not so badly off if we can
Admire Dutch painting. For that means
We shrug off what we have been told
For a hundred, two hundred years. Though we lost
Much of our previous confidence. Now we agree
That those trees outside the window, which probably exist,
Only pretend to greenness and treeness
And that the language loses when it tries to cope
With clusters of molecules. And yet this here:
A jar, a tin plate, a half-peeled lemon,
Walnuts, a loaf of bread—last, and so strongly
It is hard not to believe in their lastingness.
And thus abstract art is brought to shame,
Even if we do not deserve any other.
Therefore I enter those landscapes
Under a cloudy sky from which a ray
Shoots out, and in the middle of dark plains
A spot of brightness glows. Or the shore
With huts, boats, and, on yellowish ice,
Tiny figures skating. All this
Is here eternally, just because once it was.
Splendor (certainly incomprehensible)
Touches a cracked wall, a refuse heap,
The floor of an inn, jerkins of the rustics,
A broom, and two fish bleeding on a board.
Rejoice! Give thanks! I raised my voice
To join them in their choral singing,
Amid their ruffles, collets, and silk skirts,
One of them already, who vanished long ago.
And our song soared up like smoke from a censer.

—CZESLAW MILOSZ

(*Translated, from the Polish, by the author and Robert Hass.*)

rise and international pressures intensifying, a way had to be found to include the urban blacks in the political system. The question was how to do this without endangering white control. De Klerk was caught up in this debate, and, according to his brother, it exposed him to reformist thinking in the National Party. "At that stage, he still believed you could find a solution within the apartheid concept, but it would have to be a more enlightened kind of apartheid," Wimpie says.

But after de Klerk's election as National Party leader he was suddenly no longer the party-liner, the conformist follower. Now he had to put his own stamp on Party policy. He began by withdrawing for a few weeks to contemplate his new responsibility. His brother sees this as the most important phase of F.W.'s conversion, for it was then that he came to the conclusion that Heunis's models couldn't work. "Instead, he began developing the concept of a policy based on the protection of minority rights," Wimpie says. "The blacks would have to become part of the new Parliament. They would be in the majority, but minority rights could be protected through a bill of rights, a system of enforced coalitions—that sort of thing."

There were other influences, too. As Party leader, de Klerk made several trips abroad—a rare experience for a politician in this pariah country. He met Britain's Margaret Thatcher, West Germany's Helmut Kohl, and the leaders of Portugal, Italy, and Mozambique. All emphasized the need for South Africa to change, the dire consequences of continued isolation if it did not, and their own readiness to welcome South Africa back into the community of nations if it would abandon apartheid.

Of all the international influences, none was greater than the Gorbachev reforms that began unravelling the Communist empire, for they eased Pretoria's phobia that the black struggle against apartheid was a conspiracy directed from Moscow. It took the monkey off de Klerk's back and enabled him to justify to his people what would otherwise have appeared a suicidal course of action.

The negotiations that were to bring independence to neighboring Namibia in March, 1990, underscored the point that the Red Scare was no more. South Africa had administered the former German colony under the terms of an old League of Nations mandate for nearly three-quarters of a century. Now, as Gorbachev's Soviet Union began settling regional conflicts and removing points of friction with the United States, a deal was struck that saw Cuban troops pull out of Angola in return for South Africa's withdrawal from Namibia. The South West African People's Organization, an A.N.C. clone, won the Namibian-independence elections that followed, and South Africa handed over the territory smoothly and peacefully to an enemy it had been fighting for thirty years. "Namibia showed the South Africans this kind of change would not necessarily have catastrophic results," Sir Robin Renwick, who was the British Ambassador in South Africa at the time, says.

But the climactic event in de Klerk's evolutionary conversion was his inauguration as President, on September 20, 1989. Despite his denial of any Damascus-like experience, friends and relatives say that de Klerk has talked of being seized by a powerful sense of religious "calling" on that day, and his favorite pastor, Pieter Bingle, reinforced this theme in a sermon at the inauguration service in Pretoria.

De Klerk is a religious man, a member of the Gereformeerde Kerk, which is the smallest and most strictly Calvinist of the South African churches. Some Doppers, as the church members are called, believe they may receive a *roeping*, or call, from God to perform a specific task at a particular time in particular circumstances. It was on this theme that Bingle preached at the inauguration service. Taking Jeremiah 23 as his text, he told the new President that he was standing "in the council chamber of God" to learn the will of the Lord, and that he should act upon it. As God's instrument, Bingle went on, de Klerk should heed the traditions of his people but have the courage to break new ground.

De Klerk was deeply affected. "He was literally in tears after the service," says his brother, who attended a post-inaugural gathering of close friends and family members. "In tears, he told us that we should pray for him—that God was calling him to save all the people of South Africa, that he knew he was going to be rejected by his own people, but that he had to walk this road and that we must all help him." De Klerk admits that the inauguration ceremony was a profound emotional experience for him and that he wept afterward. "I am more emotional than I appear on the surface," he says. "And, yes, I did feel a strong sense of calling. Not in an arrogant way, as though I felt I was being looked upon as somebody special who had been singled out by God Almighty to do this job. I was very conscious, and I remain very conscious, of my shortcomings, and I constantly try to overcome them. But, yes, I also believe that God directs things here on earth, and as a result I had to accept that my election as President was something He wanted to happen, and therefore in my relationship—my vertical relationship—I have a direct responsibility and I must try to live according to that."

The first clue the public had that the new President was different from the Old Crocodile had come a week before the inauguration, after the police opened fire and killed a number of demonstrators in a "colored," or mixed-race, township outside Cape Town. The angry black community planned a protest march into the city, to be led by Archbishop Tutu, the Reverend Allan Boesak, and other church dignitaries. During the Botha years, the march would have been banned, it would have gone ahead in defiance of the ban, and there would have been a bloody clash with the police. But de Klerk, after getting assurances from the church leaders that their own marshals would control the demonstration, allowed it, and twenty thousand people marched peacefully to the steps of City Hall. Permission for other public demonstrations followed. It was the first step toward normalizing political life in South Africa.

September of 1989 seems to have marked the culmination of de Klerk's conversion—the moment when he made the decision in his own mind to release Mandela and begin negotiating with the A.N.C. Thereafter, it was only a matter of bringing his party along with him, and of deciding when and how to do it. How to manage the release was particularly problematical. There were fears of an uncontrollable emotional surge in the black community when this messianic figure emerged from his long entombment; the government was haunted by visions of the mass demonstrations that followed Ayatollah Khomeini's return to Teheran in 1979. Another problem was how to lessen the impact on the Afrikaner constituency. Botha's strategy had been to introduce changes incrementally, but the A.N.C. had thwarted that by discrediting each step as it was taken. De Klerk decided that boldness was the only way to overcome both problems. He would take a series of quantum leaps to break free of the paralysis and throw his opponents off balance.

The first of the leaps came in the predawn hours of Sunday, October 15th. Police cars pulled up outside the family homes of Walter Sisulu, a former secretary-general of the A.N.C., and four other A.N.C. life prisoners, and released them. (Also released were Jafta Masemola, the founder of the military wing of the Pan-Africanist Congress, and Oscar Mpetha, an A.N.C. member who had been jailed for terrorism in 1985, at age seventy-six.) It was a hugely emotional moment. Albertina Sisulu, a rock of stability for a family that had seen a husband imprisoned for twenty-five years, one son banned and detained, another jailed for resistance activities, and yet another son and a daughter exiled, permitted herself to shed her first tears in a quarter of a century. "I don't know how I'm going to cope with having him around the house all the time," she murmured as she hugged her silver-haired husband, who was then seventy-seven.

That night, Soweto was in ecstasy. Word had gone around a few days before that the men were to be freed, and on Saturday almost a hundred thousand people had marched through towns and cities across the country, waving still banned A.N.C. flags. Through the hubbub, Sisulu managed to give a hint of the conciliatory days that lay ahead. To an excited questioner who wanted to know whether a black government would soon take power, he replied, "We believe that in our lifetime there will be a government that includes the blacks. But we don't judge persons in terms of color. We are talking in terms of a democratic movement where a black man can be a president and a white man can be president."

Cautious though Sisulu was, the fact that he and the other released prisoners were able to speak openly in the name of the A.N.C. and that the crowds could carry A.N.C. flags and banners without being arrested meant that the ban on the organization had effectively ceased. It was clear, too, that this was a test for Mandela's release.

All this Mandela himself had negotiated in his continuing meetings with Kobie Coetsee and the committee of officials. "He insisted all the time that the others should be released first," Coetsee recalls. "He was like the captain of a ship. He wanted to see them safely outside before he himself left."

De Klerk, meanwhile, was planning his next quantum leap. On another Sunday, seven weeks later, he and his entire Cabinet, with fifty officials and advisers, boarded two Hercules transport planes at the Waterkloof military airbase and flew to a game reserve called D'Nyala, in the northeast of the country. There, deep in the wild bushveld near the Botswana border, the inner core of the government huddled together for two days of brainstorming and strategizing. This meeting was called a *bosberaad*, or bush conference, and it set a pattern of collective policy formulation and negotiation that broke with the authoritarian culture of the past. Over the next four years, D'Nyala became de Klerk's Camp David: he headed there seven times with his Party colleagues or members of other political organizations to resolve crises in the drawn-out negotiations.

The outlines of the government's new strategy were established at that first *bosberaad*. "The purpose of the meeting was to come up with a new constitutional vision, and to decide what to do about the remaining political prisoners and the banned parties," Leon Wessels, the Minister of Manpower, recalls. "We reached agreement fairly quickly on the release of prisoners, but there was lively debate about unbanning the political organizations—especially the South African Communist Party."

Roelf Meyer, who was then a deputy minister and later became the leader of the government's negotiating team, recalls that the Defense Minister, Magnus Malan, spoke out against unbanning the S.A.C.P., while others argued that if any party remained outlawed its allies would mount such a campaign in support of it that the government's moral advantage would be obscured and it would have to give way in the end.

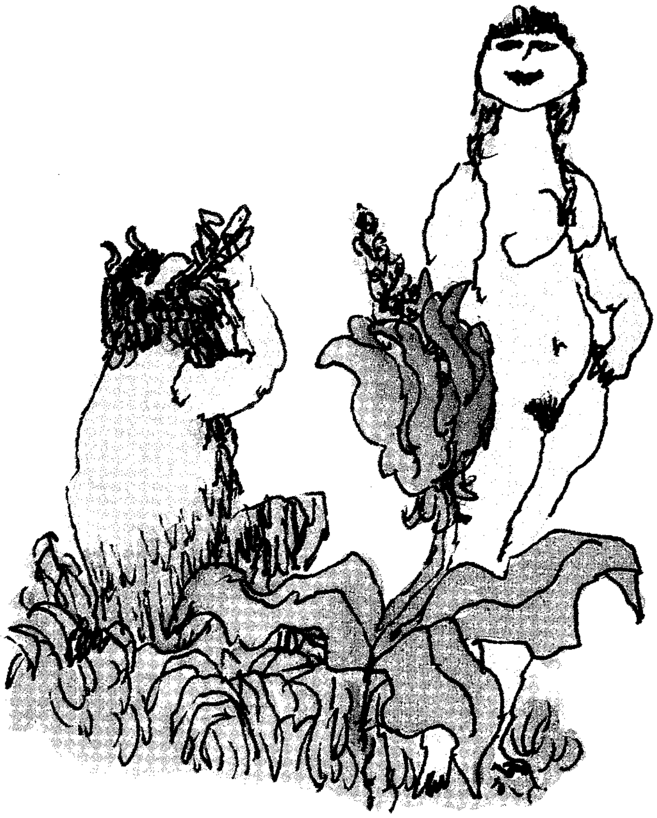
No comprehensive plan was adopted at the first *bosberaad*, Wessels says, but it was clear where the Party was headed. A week later, de Klerk had the first of three meetings with Mandela at Tuynhuys—an amicable encounter, which left Mandela with the initial impression of de Klerk as "a man of integrity."

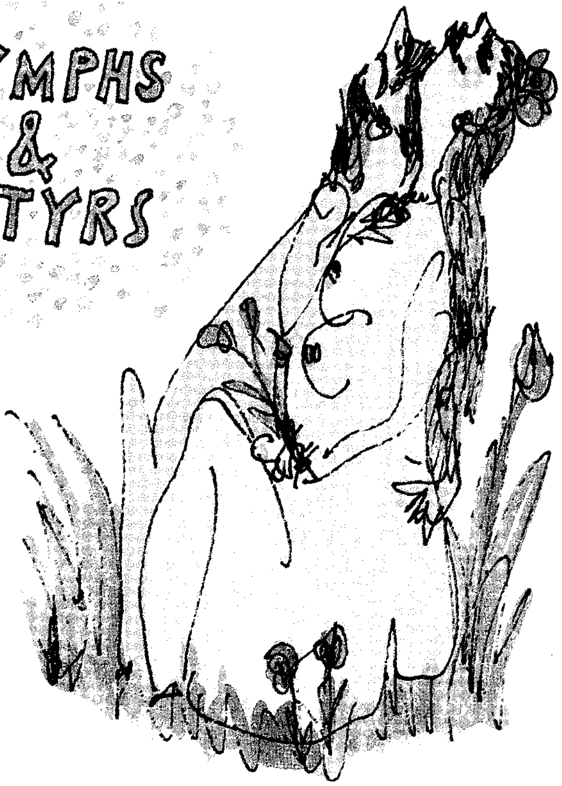
After the meetings, de Klerk went on vacation. December is high summer in South Africa and, like August in the Northern Hemisphere, a time when the country packs up and leaves town. Friends who visited the President's official holiday home, on the Natal south coast, noted that de Klerk seemed distracted and spent hours staring at the ocean. He seemed, they said, to be wrestling inwardly with himself. De Klerk admits it was what he calls "a very pensive holiday," and that he spent hours contemplating the speech he would have to make on February 2nd. "I like to sit alone and think when something is being born, when I have to translate a vision into words, into statements, into decisions which must be formulated," he says. The wrestling continued after his return. Leon Wessels accompanied him on flights to Mozambique and Transkei in mid-January, and says it was evident that de Klerk was still struggling with what to say in the speech. In the end, he wrote the text himself, by hand, over several days—the first part while sitting at the kitchen table in his holiday cottage at Hermanus, near Cape Town, and the final draft in his official Cape Town residence. "I eventually completed it just before midnight on February 1st," he says—less than twelve hours before it had to be delivered. He kept the text secret to avoid leaks, informing only a few close advisers of the main points. "I didn't tell the National Party caucus. I didn't even tell my wife, Marike, what I was going to announce," de Klerk says.

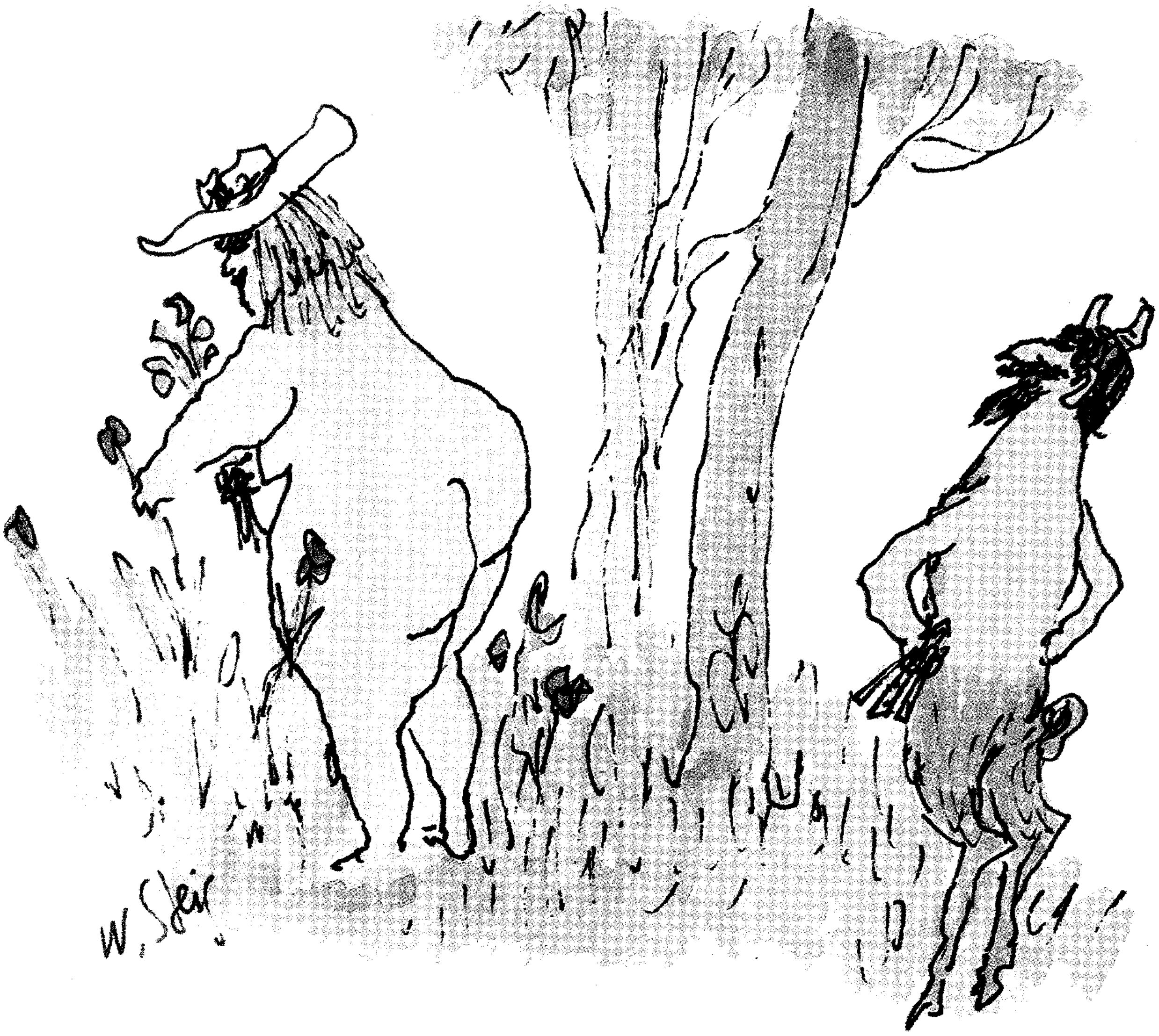
Niel Barnard was part of the inner circle that was consulted. "There was a hell of a row in the last hours before the speech was delivered—over the unbanning of the Communist Party," he recalls. But again the argument prevailed that it would be counterproductive to leave a cause for continued campaigning.

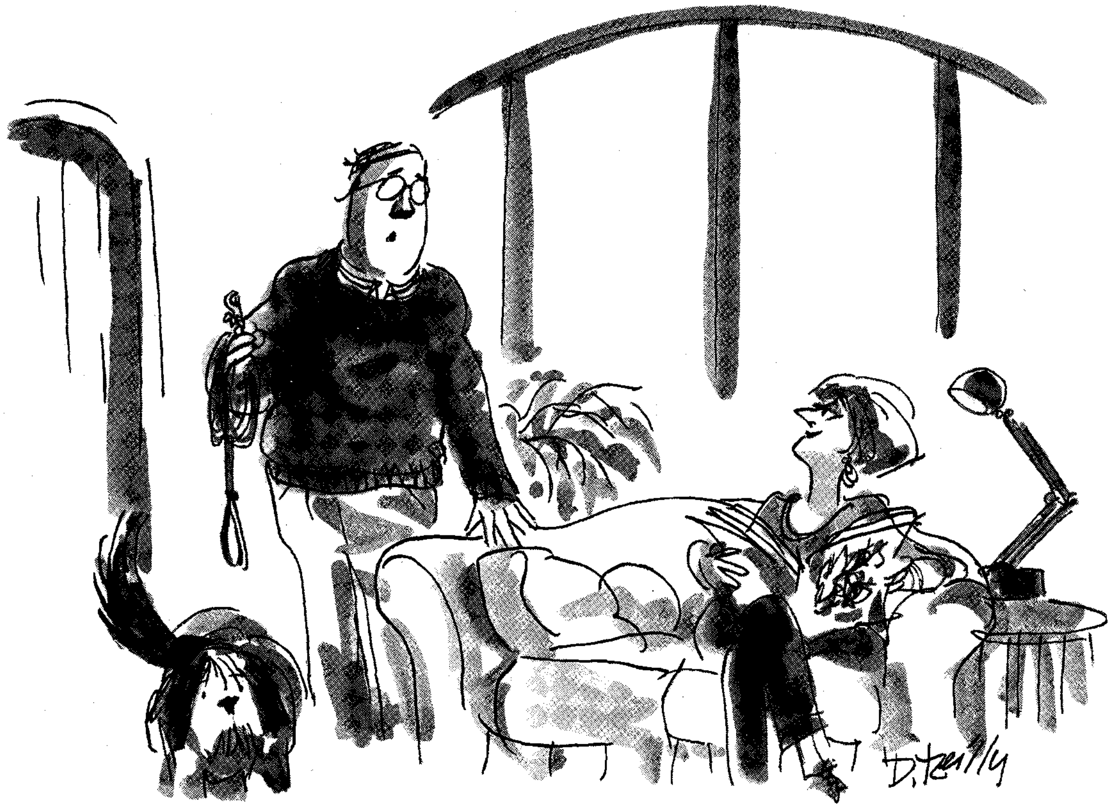
And so de Klerk went to the lectern

NYMPHS & SATYRS









"I'm going out to log some face time with the dog."

• •

to deliver his blockbuster. The impact was enormous. I was one of about two hundred reporters assembled in a briefing room adjoining Parliament half an hour before the speech. The doors were locked; we were handed copies of the text and told we could not leave until de Klerk had finished speaking. A hush settled over the room, then a rising buzz as the reporters read the text before watching de Klerk on closed-circuit television. I recall my own astonishment as I flipped through the pages. "My God, he's done it all," I murmured to David Ottaway, of the Washington *Post*. My first thought was that de Klerk didn't appreciate the full implications of what he had done—that just as Gorbachev did not imagine when he introduced perestroika that it would unleash forces that would collapse his Eastern empire, so de Klerk did not realize that his perestroika would sweep far beyond what he intended.

But in at least one respect de Klerk has been critically different from Gorbachev. He has stayed with the changes, not tried to freeze the process. He has come to recognize that you cannot reform an oppressive system—that if you start to relax it you have to go the whole hog. There cannot be perestroika, only abolition. His own process of change has kept pace with the pace of events, and that is what has saved him—and South Africa. So he will remain on the scene, although in a lesser role. This second acceptance, even more than the first, is the real measure of the man's reflective intelligence.

NINE days after de Klerk's speech, on February 11, 1990, Nelson Mandela was released. But it took almost a year for the constitutional negotiations to get under way, as the A.N.C. and Pan-Africanist Congress leaders had first to transfer their exile headquarters back home and acclimatize themselves to a country they had not seen for decades. Released prisoners and local activists, many meeting each other for the first time, had to integrate themselves into cohesive political movements and get ready to engage with the government. More difficult still was making the change from the culture and habits of mind of an underground revolutionary organization to those of a political party getting ready to engage in conventional politics.

As the black parties struggled with all this and concluded a series of preliminary agreements with the government, de Klerk worked on a strategy for getting a power-sharing constitution instead of majority rule. He clearly wanted to build an anti-A.N.C. alliance with Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi's Inkatha movement and other black political organizations that had been established under the apartheid system, and with the "colored" and Asian minorities, which he assumed would share the whites' fear of black majoritarianism. He wanted to take advantage of the confusion in A.N.C. ranks and allow time for Mandela to be demythologized from a messianic figure into just another fallible politician, unable to bring instant deliverance to his people. And he wanted a new national constitution to be negotiated at a convention of all existing political organizations, rather than in an elected constituent assembly as had been done in Namibia. He knew that his National Party and its allies would be reduced to minority status in a one-person, one-vote election, while the A.N.C. would be likely to win a big majority, enabling it to dominate the constituent assembly and write a majority-rule constitution.

The A.N.C. objected to the party-convention idea, on the ground that the existing nonwhite parties were apartheid puppets with no support. To have legitimacy, the A.N.C. argued, the new constitution would have to be written by authentic representatives of the people, who could be chosen only by an election. Eventually, the A.N.C. compromised. A multiparty convention, known by its acronym, CODESA, would negotiate an interim constitution to replace the existing apartheid charter. A one-person, one-vote election would select a national legislature that would also sit as a constituent assembly to draft the final constitution. But CODESA would also agree on a range of fundamental principles that would be binding on the constituent assembly.

CODESA opened in a cavernous exhibition center near Johannesburg airport on December 20, 1991, but problems soon arose in its meetings over the percentages that would be needed for the constituent assembly to reach agreement, and on deadlock-breaking mechanisms should it fail to get them. Matters were complicated further by a whites-only referendum, which de Klerk called in March, 1992, to deal with a challenge from his right wing that he was acting without a mandate. With the help of white liberals who had traditionally opposed him, de Klerk won the referendum handsomely, but then, in a mood of triumph, the National Party toughened its negotiating position. CODESA deadlocked, and the A.N.C. walked out to launch a campaign of "rolling mass action"—a series of general strikes and demonstrations, which threw the country into turmoil.

Political violence began escalating. Ever since Mandela's release there had been clashes in the province of Natal, as A.N.C. supporters and Buthelezi's Inkatha members fought over political turf. Inkatha had long been the dominant movement among the Zulu tribe, which is based in Natal, but with the legalizing of the A.N.C., Inkatha was faced with a powerful rival, and civil war broke out between factions within the two organizations. In mid-1990, this regional conflict leapfrogged into the crowded black townships of the Witwatersrand, the industrial heartland of the country, and centered on Johannesburg, where there was no dominant black ethnic group. The Witwatersrand was South Africa's melting pot, a polyglot urban society with no history of partisan conflict among black groups. Now that changed.

On July 14, 1990, Buthelezi relaunched Inkatha, until then a self-styled "cultural and liberation movement," as a political party that he said would seek to establish a nationwide support base. Eight days later, violence erupted in the Witwatersrand: more than thirty people were killed in fighting between supporters of the new Inkatha Freedom Party and the A.N.C. in Sebokeng, a township thirty-five miles south of Johannesburg. Sebokeng residents reported seeing busloads of Zulus arrive in their township and seize control of migrant workers' hostels, expelling the occupants. A rash of similar clashes followed, accompanied, again, by reports of Zulus being bused in and taking over the migrant workers' hostels, and then using them as bases from which to launch attacks on local residents. This provoked a series of reprisal attacks against the hostels, starting a cycle of violence that raged up and down the urban belt of the Witwatersrand, with sporadic outbursts in more distant townships.

In September, a series of random attacks in commuter trains began, with armed men rampaging through the cars, stabbing and shooting passengers and hurling them from the moving trains. Then there was a series of attacks on minivan taxis used by blacks, and drive-by shootings in township streets, and random bombings and machine-gun attacks on bars, night clubs, and private homes. Again and again, there were allegations of police either standing by and allowing the attackers to do their work or, sometimes, joining in the attacks. These allegations first gained credibility in July, 1991, when a newspaper disclosed that the police had secretly funded Inkatha, to boost it as a rival to the A.N.C. Sixteen months later, a commission of inquiry headed by a respected judge, Richard Goldstone, raided the secret headquarters of a renegade element of Military Intelligence and seized documents showing them to be carrying out clandestine anti-A.N.C. operations. Last month, Goldstone's commission disclosed what it called "a horrible network of criminal activity" among senior officers of the South African police force which had helped sponsor this violence. It named the second-in-command of the police force, Lieutenant General Basie Smit, and the chief of police counter-intelligence, Major General Krappies Engelbrecht, who was in charge of investigating all acts of political violence, as key figures in the network. According to a detailed report that the commission presented to de Klerk, the renegade officers had been gunrunning for Inkatha for years. They had set up a weapons-manufacturing project, had helped orchestrate violence in the Witwatersrand through the Inkatha Freedom Party's two provincial leaders, Themba Khoza and Victor Ndlovu, and had quashed investigations into the operations they were masterminding.

Like a grand-jury finding, Goldstone's report does not amount to a trial and conviction. The charges are not proved. But the evidence is formidable nonetheless, and helps substantiate repeated A.N.C. accusations that there has been a "third force" operating within the military-security establishment to try to destabilize the country, make holding an election impossible, and halt the transition to democracy.

This is what has soured the relations between Mandela and de Klerk. Reluctantly at first, but more emphatically later, Mandela turned on the President with accusations of bad faith. While never accusing de Klerk of actively instigating the violence, Mandela has blamed him for failing to put an end to it and hinted at a degree of complicity. Privately, he speaks with anger about a man he feels has betrayed his trust. Publicly, he maintains a cordial relationship, recognizing the mutual dependency of black and white South Africans which is essential to the country's future.

Was de Klerk involved in the violence? Most blacks are convinced he was. De Klerk himself added to this perception with an unconvincing denial that he knew anything about the police funding of Inkatha, and with a weak-kneed response to Goldstone's discovery of the dirty-tricks group in Military Intelligence: he suspended or forced into retirement twenty-three officers, including two high-ranking generals, but left them all on full pensions. De Klerk has been timid again in the face of Goldstone's more damning recent disclosures, merely ordering the implicated police officers to go on compulsory leave and appearing hesitant about what to do when two of them refused. Yet it is difficult to believe de Klerk has had a hand in these shabby activities. While he has a political interest in weakening the A.N.C. as his main adversary in this month's election, he certainly does not have any in destabilizing the negotiating process or the country as a whole. His reputation and future depend on the success of the process he started.

How, then, does one explain de Klerk's halfhearted attempts to clamp down on the renegade elements in his security forces? The most likely explanation is that de Klerk, never sure of the extent of his control over Botha's old securocrat establishment, has not wanted to put it to the test. As Frederick van Zyl Slabbert, a former white opposition leader, puts it, what do you do if you confront your top generals and say, "You're fired," and they reply, "No we're not"? In Lyndon Johnson's phrase, de Klerk has tried to keep them inside the tent pissing out, rather than outside the tent pissing in.

Whatever the reason, the continuing violence and the perceptions of it have strongly influenced what has happened. Two years after the violence flared up in the Witwatersrand, there occurred an incident that changed the whole course of events. On the night of June 17, 1992, a posse of armed Zulus crept out of a hostel near a township south of Johannesburg called Boipatong, and, in an orgy of slaughter, killed at least thirty-eight residents. Outrage swept the country. Whatever the truth about de Klerk's involvement in a destabilization campaign, the black community was overwhelmingly convinced that he had done nothing to stop it. Posters openly accusing him of murder appeared at mass demonstrations. When de Klerk tried to make a conciliatory visit to Boipatong three days after the massacre, angry demonstrators drove him out. In the turmoil that followed, the police opened fire and killed more civilians.

The mood in the black townships had been deteriorating for months. There was disillusionment at the slow pace of the negotiations, and the rising level of violence meant that life, instead of getting better after Mandela's release, had become more intolerable than ever. At a rally Mandela addressed in Evaton township, near Boipatong, four days after the massacre, angry voices called, "You are like lambs while the government is killing us!"

It became clear that the A.N.C. would have to respond to this mood if it was not to alienate its constituency. The mood also strengthened the militant wing of the A.N.C., which had been accusing the negotiators of giving away too much and wanted the government to be put under maximum pressure. Just as the March, 1992, referendum had caused the government to toughen its position, now the balance of influence in the A.N.C. swung to the radicals. Encouraged by the popular response to the mass-action campaign, and still feeling cheated out of their revolution, some of these radicals began talking of a "Leipzig option"—a reference to the mass demonstrations that toppled Erich Honecker's East German regime. This soon led to yet another disaster.

One of the A.N.C.'s main sources of grievance was that it was unable to hold meetings and organize branches in the self-governing homelands, where de Klerk was busily building his anti-A.N.C. alliance. The local potentates simply prohibited such activity. This was particularly galling in the case of the Ciskei homeland, which lies in the eastern Cape Province, the A.N.C.'s main stronghold. Opinion polls showed that the territory's military ruler, Oupa Gqozo, had negligible support, yet, with a white-officered army and police force, he kept the A.N.C. immobilized. The A.N.C., led by the radicals, decided to target Gqozo with a mass-action campaign. The plan was to lead a protest march into the homeland's Independence Stadium and hold a rally, but Ronnie Kasrils, a white Communist who had been chief of intelligence for the A.N.C.'s former guerrilla army, saw the opportunity for a more spectacular demonstration. On September 7, 1992, as the crowd, some fifty thousand, entered the stadium, Kasrils led a group in a dash through a gap in a security fence. His idea was to take the demonstrators across a highway into the central business district of Bisho, the homeland's capital, where they would hold a "people's assembly" and demand political rights in the territory.

The A.N.C. had managed to get last-minute approval to cross into Ciskei for the stadium rally, and Kasrils figured that a further push into the homeland would be "a cinch." But he had not reckoned on the heedless violence of Gqozo's ill-trained troops. The troops had taken up positions beyond the gap, and as Kasrils and his followers sprinted through it they opened fire, raking the crowd with two sustained machine-gun bursts, which killed twenty-eight people and wounded more than two hundred.

In the shocked aftermath of the Bisho bloodbath, and with international reaction holding Pretoria primarily responsible, de Klerk issued a public invitation to Mandela to join him at a summit meeting to find a way of ending the spiral of violence. Mandela responded positively. Once again, South Africa's black and white leaders had to stare into the abyss in order to recognize their mutual dependency. If the violence went out of control, both would be losers.

THE summit, which was held in Johannesburg on September 26th, was the turning point, but in fact there had been progress toward it for some time. Behind the blood and rhetoric that had enveloped South Africa and given outsiders the impression that it was sliding down the Sarajevo road, a series of secret meetings had been taking place between two men who were ultimately to emerge as the heroes of the political agreement. Roelf Meyer, forty-six, and Cyril Ramaphosa, forty-one, both youngsters in the political arena, had met briefly at London's Heathrow Airport in 1987, but it was not until August, 1991, that they got to know each other better, in circumstances that might be regarded as an allegory for the country whose conflicting factions they represented. Meyer was then Deputy Minister of Constitutional Development and a member of the government's negotiating team. Ramaphosa was secretary-general of the A.N.C. and its chief negotiator. Sidney Frankel, a Johannesburg stockbroker who knew both men, decided that it would be a good idea to get the two together. He invited them for a fishing weekend at his trout resort, near the picturesque eastern Transvaal town of Machadodorp, a hundred and seventy miles from Johannesburg.

Ramaphosa and his wife, Nomazizi, drove to the resort on a Friday evening. Frankel and his wife, Carolyn, and their ten-year-old daughter, Susan, were already there. The next morning, Meyer arrived by helicopter with his sons—Tobie, fifteen, and Wimpie, eight. Just as the helicopter was landing, Susan Frankel fell and broke her arm. It was a bad compound fracture, and her anxious parents boarded the helicopter to whisk her to the hospital back in Johannesburg, leaving Meyer and Ramaphosa alone with their families at the holiday cottage.

Meyer's sons began nagging their dad to take them fishing. Roelf Meyer protested that he knew nothing about fishing, so Ramaphosa, an expert trout fisherman, offered to teach the boys. The group headed for a dam below the cottage, and there, as Roelf Meyer tried clumsily to cast a line, he got a hook deeply embedded in one of the fingers of his left hand.

The group returned to the cottage, where Nomazizi Ramaphosa, a nurse, tried in vain to maneuver the hook out. After an hour, and with Meyer growing faint with pain, Cyril Ramaphosa intervened. "Roelf," he said, "there's only one way to do this." He poured a half glass of neat whiskey for Meyer, fetched a pair of pliers from the tool kit of his car, and took a firm grip on the hook. "I've always wanted to hurt you Nats," he told the Deputy Minister, "but never as much as this." Ramaphosa pressed the hook down hard to make space for the barb and, with a powerful wrench, pulled it out.

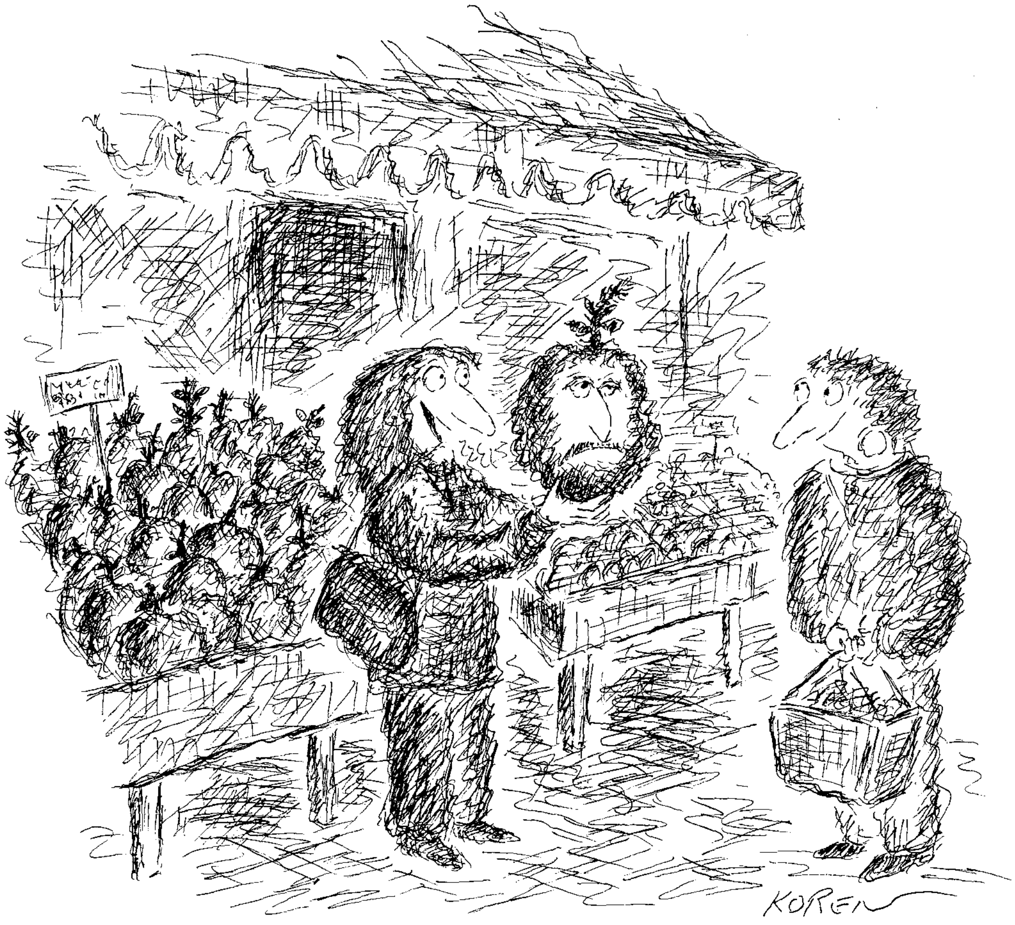
Meyer muttered, "Well, Cyril, don't say I didn't trust you."

Ten months later, as the A.N.C. walked out of CODESA, Meyer was appointed Minister of Constitutional Development and took over as head of the government's negotiating team—Ramaphosa's opposite number. The two men insist that they have not become friends: they have maintained a strict working relationship, never socializing, so as not to compromise their parties. "But I think it may develop into a friendship later," Meyer says.

What they do have is a high level of mutual trust and an almost intuitive understanding of each other. Through the grim months between June and September of 1992, when no negotiations were being conducted, Meyer and Ramaphosa went on meeting, one on one, in hotel rooms several times a week, trying to pick up the pieces. Those months were a formative time in other ways, too, with a subtle change of political chemistry taking place in both camps.

Doubts began to arise within the National Party about de Klerk's strategy of trying to build a winning anti-A.N.C. alliance. The violence, and the suspicions of government complicity in it, had damaged both the Party's image and the national economy. In addition, Buthelezi's erratic behavior, together with opinion polls indicating that Inkatha by mid-1992 had ceased to have majority support among the Zulus, raised doubts about his value as a political ally.

Meanwhile, a group of upwardly mobile young Afrikaner politicians—Roelf Meyer and Leon Wessels among them—began reassessing their own career prospects. While older members of the de Klerk Cabinet were preoccupied with justifying their past activities and insuring that not too much would be changed, these younger people began to face the fact that their futures lay in what was going to be a nonracial South Africa, and they did not want the albatross of apartheid around their necks. Trying to build a dubious alliance to fight the major black political movement made less and less sense to them. Eventually, a fault line developed in the Cabinet—the pro-Buthelezi faction, still committed to the original strategy, on one side, and the younger bloods, keener to link up with the A.N.C., on the other. The division widened as the younger ministers gained the ascendancy after Boipatong and Bisho. Ironically, Kobie Coetsee, the man who started the whole transition process with Nelson Mandela, has emerged on the side of the Cabinet's Old Guard—"the antis," as an Afrikaans newspaper has called them. Unlike de Klerk, Coetsee has failed to keep pace with the evolution of events and is dismayed that the constitutional agreement has moved so far beyond the



"Kate! Is this or is this not my ex?"

National Party's original model, with its emphasis on power-sharing between ethnic groups. "It has taken a different direction, which I think may cost the country dearly," Coetsee says. Yet he retains a warm relationship with Mandela. The two men developed a liking for one another during their years of contact while Mandela was in prison. I was the first journalist to interview Mandela after his release, and as we talked in his Soweto home we were interrupted by a telephone call from Coetsee inquiring how the released prisoner was settling down. "He calls nearly every day to see how I'm getting on," Mandela remarked with a smile. Now, four years on, the two make a point of lunching together every few months. "We don't talk about politics," Coetsee says. "We just chat about personal things."

While the Cabinet was dividing between its Old Guard and Young Turks, a similar change was taking place in the liberation movement, where some of the moderates were turning their minds to how they might bridge the vital gap between power-sharing and majority rule. Surprisingly, the lead came from Joe Slovo, the chairman of the South African Communist Party, who had once been Pretoria's *bête rouge* but now was playing an increasingly conciliatory role. Writing in the Party magazine, *African Communist*, Slovo suggested a "sunset clause," which would provide for compulsory power-sharing for a fixed number of years and then fall away. It was an offer that the younger members of the Cabinet found irresistible.

The Mandela-de Klerk summit took place in this changed and chastened atmosphere, and ended with the signing of a Record of Understanding that would get the negotiations going again. The agreement, which the Cabinet's Old Guard accused de Klerk of smuggling past them, included government undertakings to fence in the hostels and to prohibit Buthelezi's followers from carrying their "cultural weapons"—clubs, spears, and machetes, which Inkatha members claimed they had a traditional right to bear, but which they had used in the township fighting.

Buthelezi was furious. It meant that the government was dumping him to strike a coalition deal with the A.N.C. He broke off relations with de Klerk, withdrew Inkatha from the negotiating council, and, to de Klerk's embarrassment, formed an alliance with other homelanders and the far-rightist Afrikaner Volksfront.

But the die was cast. The government and the A.N.C. cemented their new understanding at two *bosberaad* meetings in late October and early November. For four days and nights, senior members of both organizations talked, lived, ate, and relaxed together in the seclusion of D'Nyala. Some went jogging together in the mornings, and in the evenings they sat around a campfire under a tamboti tree getting to know one another. Old animosities thawed, and a certain rapprochement, if not actual friendship, emerged. Leon Wessels recalls going for an early-morning swim and meeting Slovo in the pool. "We chatted for an hour and I got an altogether different perspective on him," Wessels says.

From then on, the government and the A.N.C. cruised toward agreement, carrying the bulk of the negotiating parties with them. As sticking points arose, one would see Meyer and Ramaphosa slip quietly from their seats to meet in a corner. A compromise proposal would follow. Or there would be an adjournment to allow for a longer consultation. The media dubbed their relationship "The Roelf and Cyril Show," and it became the hub around which the entire negotiation turned.

The last clause of the new constitution was adopted just before dawn on November 18, 1993. It was Ramaphosa's birthday, and Meyer presented him with a cake. A band struck up, and the two negotiators stepped onto a dance floor and swung to "In the Mood."

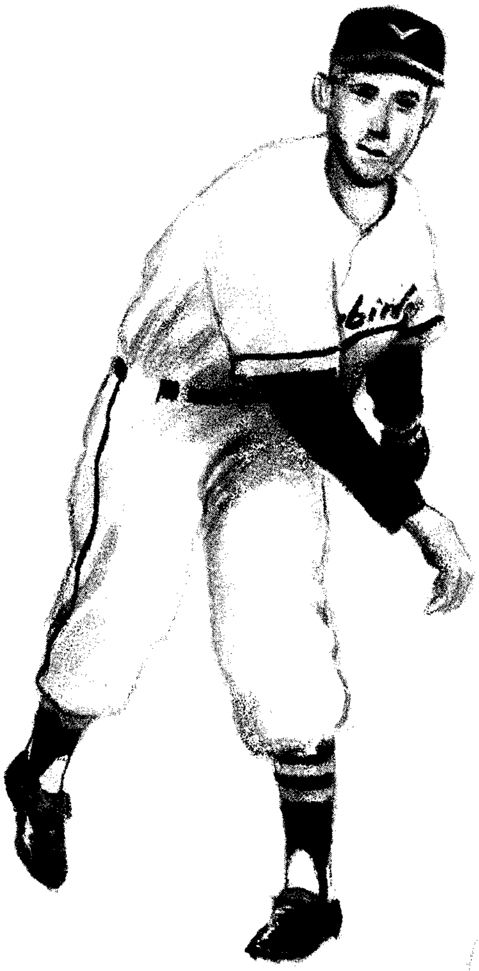
Even apart from its strange origins, the negotiating process has been a remarkable phenomenon. For the past four years, South Africa, an authoritarian country with no history or experience of interracial dialogue, has been engaged in what Professor David Welsh, of the University of Cape Town, calls "a gigantic and ongoing seminar" on the nation's future. Up to twenty-six political organizations as widely divergent as the Communist Party and the right-wing Conservatives have participated at various times, and most have managed to reach agreement on the essential shape of that future. Moreover, until the last few weeks, when there has been talk of bringing in foreign mediators to try to placate the fractious Buthelezi, it has all been done without the help of outsiders. There has been no United Nations brokerage or Lancaster House conference or Vance-Owen plan, no meeting of old adversaries on the White House lawn. These widely divergent groups have thrashed out their new constitution for themselves, much as the Founding Fathers of the United States did in 1787.

WITH less than three weeks to go to the election, both de Klerk and Mandela are campaigning hard—de Klerk subjecting himself to the novel experience of stumping through the black townships, chucking black babies under the chin, and trying to identify with "the people"; Mandela, at seventy-five, maintaining a punishing schedule as he crisscrosses the country addressing rallies of up to fifty thousand people. His minders worry that Tata—"Father," as Mandela is affectionately called by his closest associates—is being overworked, but the old man drives himself relentlessly, as though trying to make up for the wasted years, and he seems to revel in the action and the adulation as he waves to the big crowds. His party is expected to win more than sixty per cent of the vote, which would assure Mandela of the Presidency. De Klerk, who is likely to run second, with about twenty per cent, will share power as a vice-president in the government of national unity.

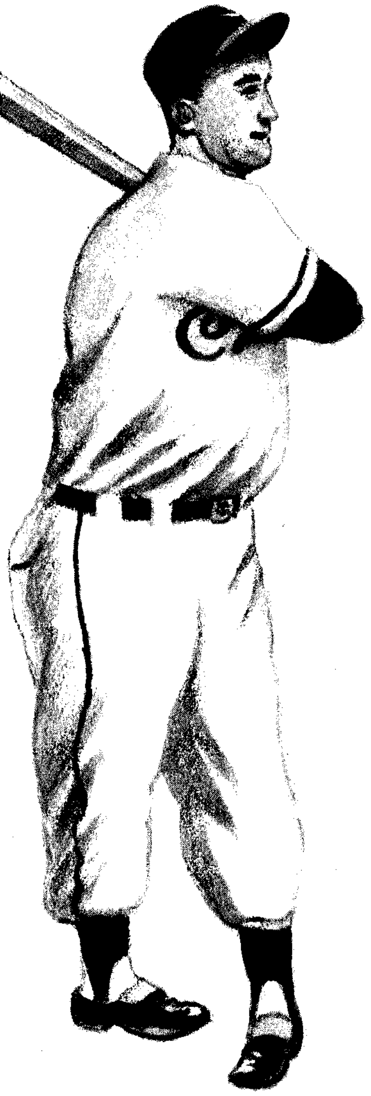
Of course, things may yet go wrong. Like Bosnia-Herzegovina, South Africa has an explosive ethnic mixture, and since the initial negotiations began more than thirteen thousand people have already died in political violence. White extremists have vowed to wage war in their quest for a separate Afrikaner *volkstaat*, and the loyalty of the predominantly white security forces remains open to doubt. Buthelezi, too, is an erratic, ego-driven figure, whose future direction remains uncertain. Yet the centripetal forces that have brought South Africa this far appear stronger than those that could cause it to fly apart. The inescapable mutual dependency of the black and the white South Africans is what holds them together. It is the lesson of the trout hook. ♦

SAY HOWDY TO YOUR '52 COWBIRDS!

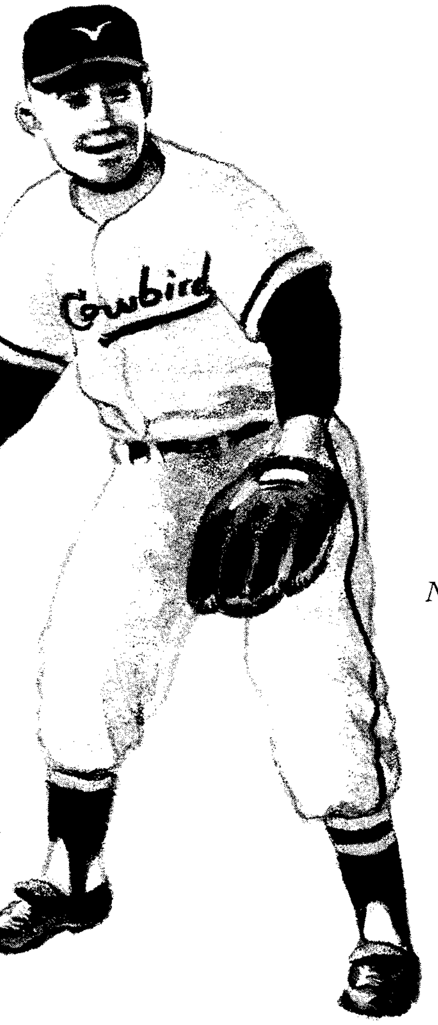
BY BRUCE McCALL



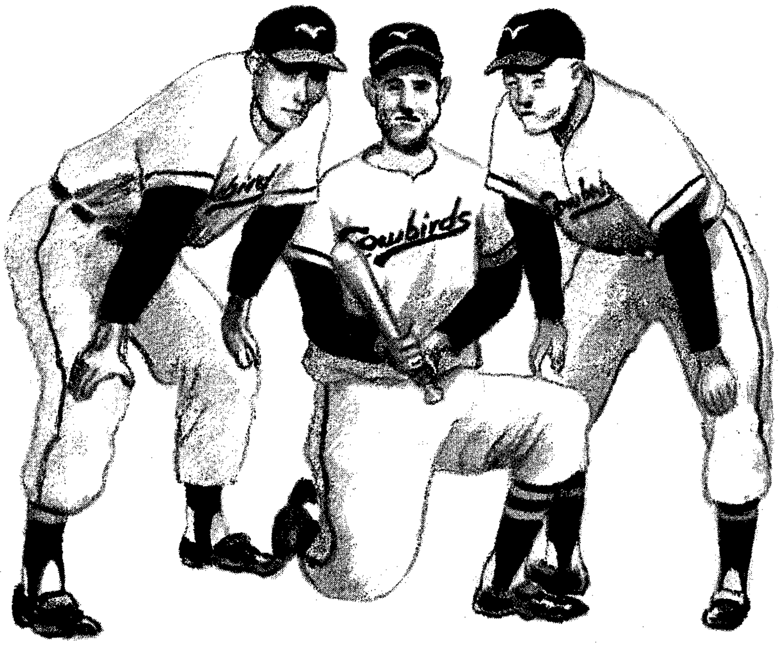
Righty workhorse Art Slezak's 32 complete-game losses in '51 gave an injury-riddled Cowbirds mound staff invaluable rest.



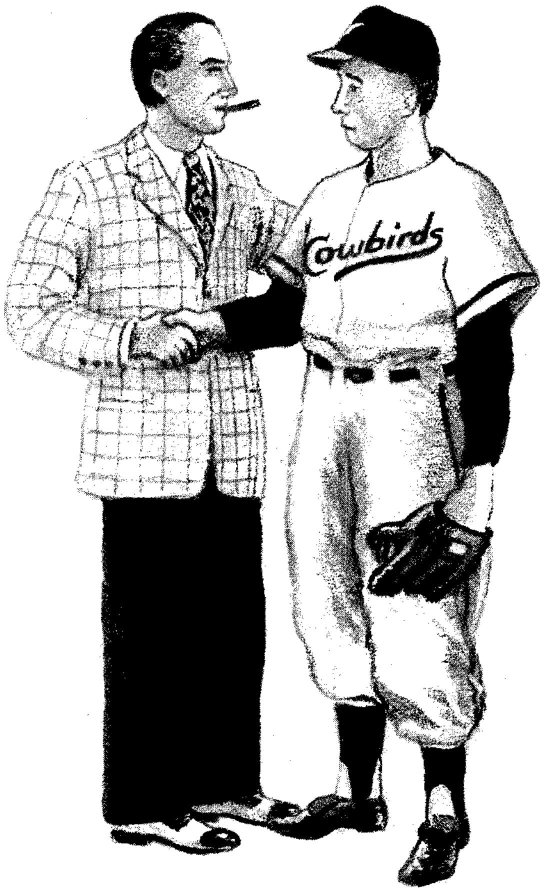
Cowbird fans don't care if grizzled slugger Chick is an off-season cruise-ship tango dancer engaged to Hollywood spitfire Nita Olay or not. They do want to know if he's recovered the swing that led the team in its torrid run for seventh place in '51. Let's just say the big guy stroked one tape-measure foul in training camp that hasn't come down yet!



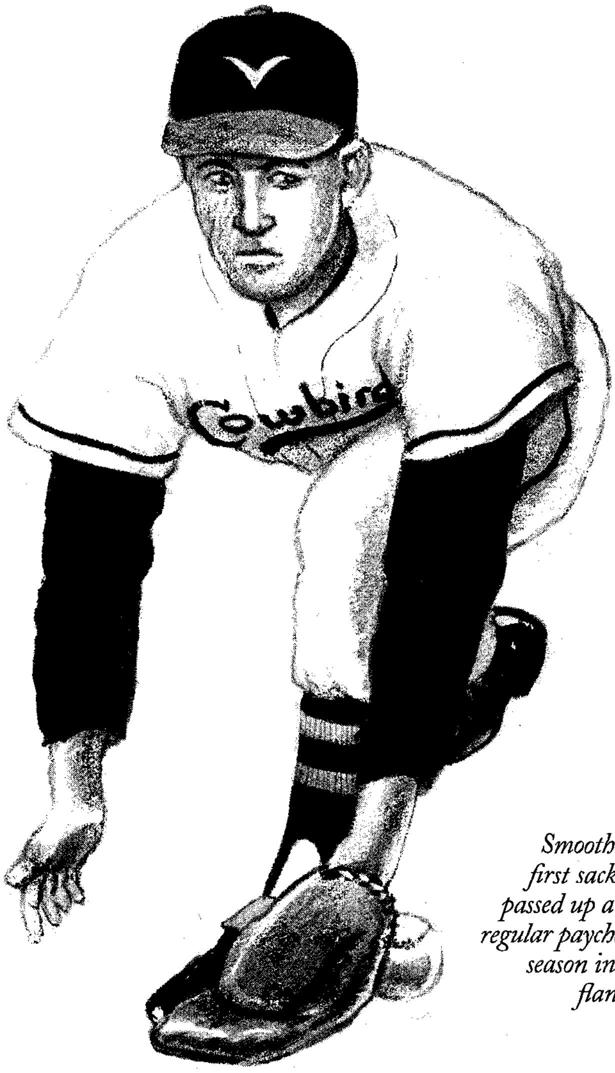
Whew! "The sound heard 'round the Grapefruit League" turned out to be only a hairline skull fracture—and, thanks to team physician Dr. Intaglio's ol' reliable aspirin cure, fan favorite Eddie didn't miss a game!



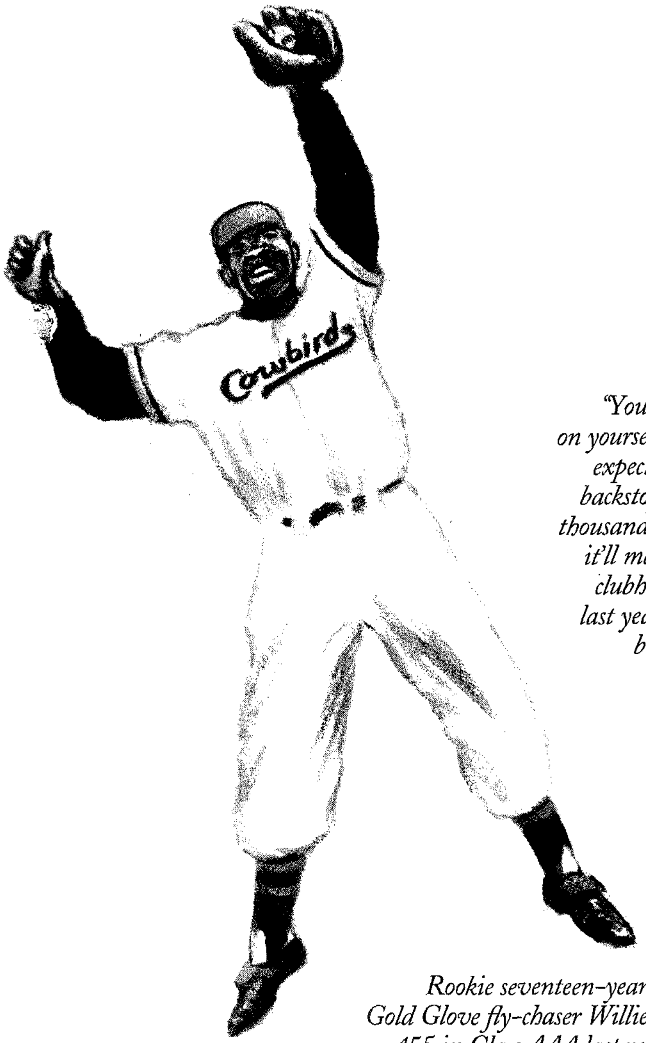
Wish upon a magic bat!
Detmold and Lumley admire crafty spitballer Wojczyki's 22-oz. Hillerich & Bradsby. He was the sole hurler in '51 to lead his club in homers!

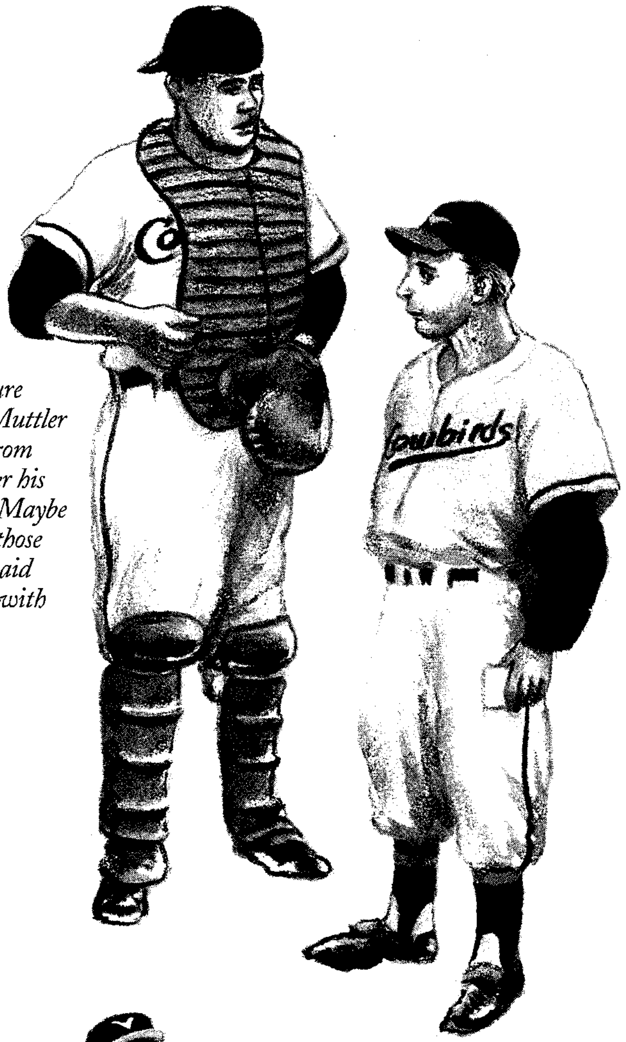


"Thanks, Al!"
Cowbirds vet Duane gets word from G.M. O'Grady that he's been outrighted to Ottumwa, nearer his home town of San Diego.



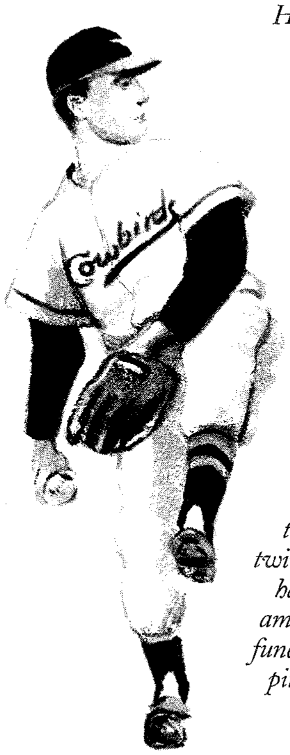
Smooth-fielding first sacker Kadok passed up a bank teller's regular paycheck for another season in Cowbird flannels!



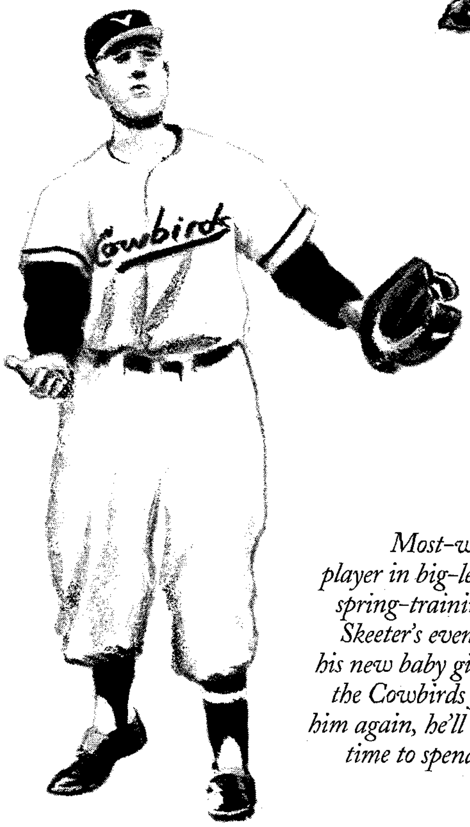


"You put the pressure on yourself!" Skipper Muttler expects big things from backstop Budnik after his thousand-dollar raise. Maybe it'll make up for all those clubhouse fines he paid last year for playing with broken fingers!

Rookie seventeen-year-old Gold Glove fly-chaser Willie Roper hit .455 in Class AAA last year, with 113 R.B.I.s and 54 stolen sacks. He'll have to up those numbers to crack the Cowbird lineup.



This man came to play! Nifty starboard twirler Lou reports off-season handshaking as good-will ambassador for an Alabama funeral home strengthened his pitching arm—but plenty!



Most-waived player in big-league annals, spring-training addition Skeeter's even prouder of his new baby girl—and since the Cowbirds just waived him again, he'll have lots more time to spend with her.

FICTION

HIRED GIRL

BY ALICE MUNRO

MRS. MONTJOY was showing me how to put the pots and pans away in her cupboard. I had put some of them in the wrong places.

"Just like our hired girls at home," I said. "The first few days, they were always putting things away where we couldn't find them. We called our maids hired girls, at home."

"Did you?" said Mrs. Montjoy. A moment of silence passed. "And the colander on that hook there."

Nothing about my life could interest or impress her.

Above all things, she said, she hated a higgledy-piggledy cupboard.

A couple of days before this, Mrs. Montjoy had picked me up at the station in Pointe au Baril and brought me to the island. I had got the job through the woman in the Pointe au Baril store, an old friend of my mother's—they had once taught school together. Mrs. Montjoy had asked this woman if she knew of a country girl who would take a summer job, and the woman had thought that I would be about the right age, and trained to do housework.

Mrs. Montjoy wore khaki shorts and a tucked-in shirt. Her short, sun-bleached hair was pushed behind her ears. She had leapt on board the boat like a boy, given a fierce tug to the outboard motor, and we were flung out on the choppy evening waters of Georgian Bay. For thirty or forty minutes we dodged among the rocky wooded islands, with their lone cottages, their boats bobbing beside the dock, and their pine trees jutting out at odd angles, just as they do in paintings.

I held on to the sides of the boat, and shivered in my flimsy new dress.

"Feeling sick?" said Mrs. Montjoy, with the briefest possible smile—it was like a signal for a smile, when the occasion did not warrant the real thing. She had large, white teeth in a long face, and her commonest expression seemed to be one of impatience held decently in check. She probably knew that what I was feeling was fear, not sickness, and she threw out this question so that I—and she—need not be embarrassed. What she did not understand was that fear did not embarrass me.

Here was a difference, already, from the world that I was used to. In that world, fear was commonplace, at least for a female. You could be afraid of snakes, thunderstorms, deep water, heights, rats, and the road through the swamp, and nobody thought any the worse of you. In Mrs. Montjoy's world, however, fear was shameful, always something to be conquered.

The island that was our destination had a name—Nausicaä. It was written on a board at the end of the dock. This name seemed to me a good sign, and I said it aloud as I clambered out of the boat. I was anxious to appear appreciative and at ease.

"Oh, yes," Mrs. Montjoy said. "That was its name when Daddy bought it. It's after some character in Shakespeare."

I opened my mouth to say no, no, not Shakespeare, and to explain all about Nausicaä being the girl on the beach—the princess playing ball with her friends—whom Ulysses surprised when he awoke from his sleep. I was used to giving out information of this sort, without thinking about whether people wanted it. But some briskness in Mrs. Montjoy's tone warned me off, this time. My superior knowledge gave me a familiar feeling, of satisfaction and misgiving.

The dress I was wearing was one I had made myself of pink-and-white striped cotton. The material had been cheap, because it was not really meant for a dress but for a blouse or a nightgown, and the style I had chosen—the full-skirted, tight-waisted style of those days, the early fifties—was a mistake. When I walked, the cloth bunched up between my legs, and I had to yank it free. Today was the first day the dress had been worn, and I still thought that the problem was temporary—with a firm enough yank the skirt could be made to hang properly. But I found when I took off my belt that the day's heat and my sweat on the train had created a worse problem. The belt was wide and elasticized, and it was of a burgundy color, which had run. It had circled my waist with strawberry stains.

I made this discovery in the loft of the boathouse, where I was to sleep. I shared the loft with Mrs. Montjoy's ten-year-old daughter, Mary Anne. Mary Anne was fair-haired and freckled, with a long face, like her mother's. But she didn't have her mother's look of quick judgments waiting, marshalled right at the surface, ready to be tossed out at you. Her expression was benign and serious—she wore her heavy glasses even when she was sitting up in bed. It had taken two operations to get her eyes as straight as they were now. ("Daddy's eyes," she called them.)

"That's too bad about your dress," she said.

I said it was an old dress anyway. "I didn't want to wear anything good on the train."

ALL night long you could hear the water slapping against the boards of the boathouse. Morning came early here. A hundred miles north of home—could that make a difference? There was a window at each end of the loft. I got up and looked out.

Through one window the silky water, dark underneath but flashing back, from its surface, the light of the sky. The rocky shores of a little cove, the moored sailboats, the open channel beyond, the mound of another island, shores and channels beyond that. I thought that I would never, on my own, be able to find my way back to the mainland.

But maids don't have to find their way anywhere. They stay put, where the work is. It's the other people who come and go.

The other window looked out on a gray rock that was like a slanting wall, with shelves and crevices on it where little pine and cedar trees, and blueberry bushes, had got a foothold. Down at the base of the rock was a path—which I would take later on—through the woods, to Mrs. Montjoy's house. Here everything was damp and almost in darkness still, though the sky was whitening at the top of the rock. The trees here were the strict and fragrant evergreens, with their heavy boughs that don't allow much growth underneath—no riot of saplings and brambles and grapevines such as you find in the hardwood forest. Mostly damp ferns, blueberries. I had noticed this the day before, from the train, and it seemed to me that this was a more authentic forest than the bush lots we had at home—it had eliminated all that lavishness and confusion and seasonal change. And it went on more or less forever.

This morning was the last time that I would feel the shock of this different place on my eyes and skin in this way. What happened after that? It wasn't a matter of things becoming familiar, or housewife's blinkers being put on my eyes—I was not that vigilant, or conscientious. It was just that a barrier went up. A transparent barrier. And perhaps "barrier" is too strong a word—all I mean is that there was something like a heat shimmer in the air, not a warning so much as an indolent reminder. *Not for you.* As if it hardly needed to be said. *Not for you.* And of course I would not admit that such a reminder was there, I would never admit that I was in the least humbled or lonely, or even that I had really become a servant. But I started thinking differently, without admitting it to myself. I stopped thinking about leaving the path, going in among the trees, walking there by myself. I would have had to explain what I was doing, if anybody saw me, and the thought of that made the whole thing too much trouble.

Mary Anne liked to talk when we were lying in our cots at night. She told me that her favorite book was "Kon-Tiki" and that she didn't believe in God or in Heaven.

"My sister is dead," she said. "But I don't believe she is floating around in space in a white nightie. She's just dead, she is nothing."

"My sister was pretty," she said. "Compared to me, anyway. Mother isn't pretty and Daddy is really ugly. Aunt Margaret used to be pretty, but she's fat now, and Nana used to be pretty, but she's old. My friend Helen is pretty but my friend Susan isn't. You are sort of pretty, but it isn't the same thing, because you're a maid. Does it hurt your feelings when I say that?"

I said no. "I'm only a maid when I'm here."

It wasn't that I was the only servant, even on this island. The other servants were Henry and Corrie, and they were not unhappy with their jobs—in fact, they were grateful. Henry and Corrie had come to Canada from Holland a few years before and had gone to work for Mr. and Mrs. Foley, who were Mrs. Montjoy's parents. Mr. and Mrs. Foley spent the summers in a big white house with verandas and awnings, on the highest point of the island. Henry cut the grass and looked after the tennis court and helped Mr. Foley with the boats, the clearing of the paths, and repairs to the dock. Corrie did the housework and cooked the meals and looked after Mrs. Foley. Mrs. Foley spent every sunny morning sitting out on a deck chair on the grass, with her feet stretched out to get the sun and a little awning protecting her head. Corrie came and shifted her around as the sun moved, took her to the bathroom, and brought her cups of tea or glasses of iced coffee. (I often had to go up to the Foleys' house on some errand. I took things there, to put in the freezer, and I got things out. Home freezers were uncommon at that time.)

"You are not going to suck the ice cubes, are you?" I heard Corrie say to Mrs. Foley one afternoon. She stood by and watched, and when Mrs. Foley did begin to suck an ice cube, she said, "Spit it out. Spit it right out in Corrie's hand. You didn't do what I say."

"She could choke to death," Corrie said to me later. "But Mrs. Montjoy, Mr. Foley—they say, 'Give her ice cubes like everybody else.' So I watch her."

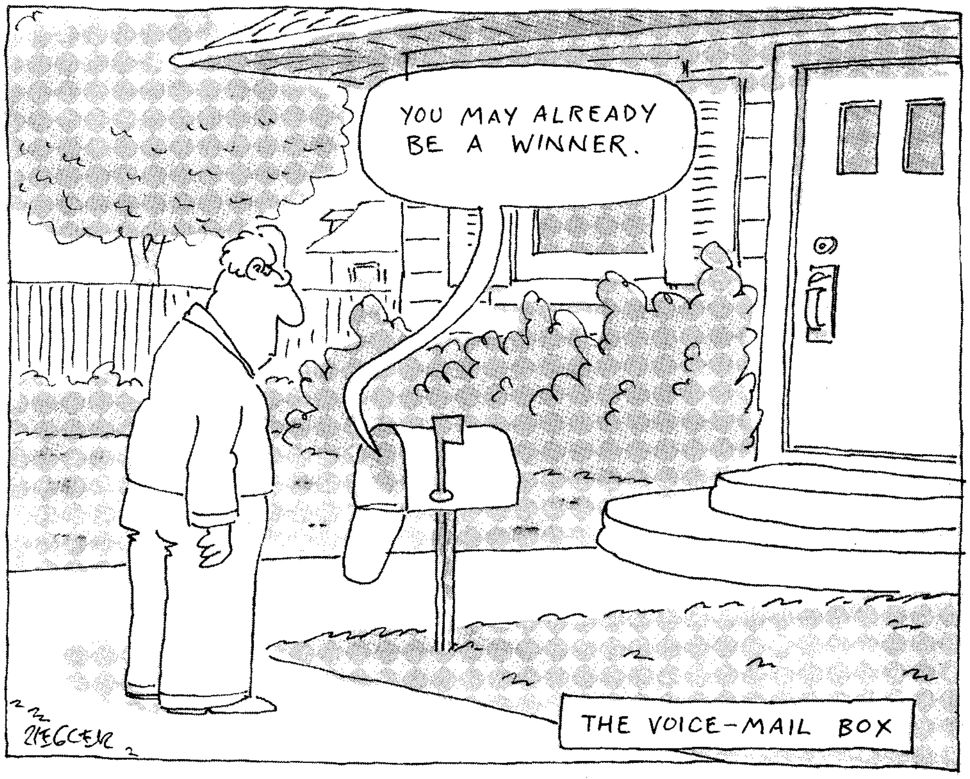
I thought it might be interesting if Corrie talked about the war. But all she would say was that everybody had been very hungry and that they had made soup out of potato skins.

"No good," she said. "No good to talk about it."

Corrie never just wiped the counters—she scoured them. Every move she made had the energy and concentration somebody would show when rowing a boat against the current, and every word she said was flung out as if against a high wind. When she wrung out the cleaning rag, she might have been wringing the neck of a chicken.

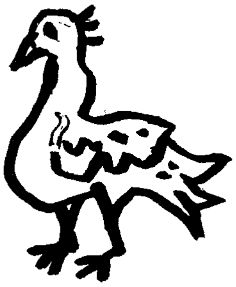
She and Henry were saving their money to go into business. They meant to start a nursing home. "Lots of them like her," said Corrie, throwing her head back to indicate Mrs. Foley on the lawn. "Soon more and more, because of the doctors; they are not dying soon. Who will be taking care?"

One day, Mrs. Foley called out to me as I crossed the lawn. "Now, where are



you going to in this hot sun? You sit down by me and have a little rest."

Her white hair was tucked up under a floppy straw hat, and when she leaned forward the sun came through the holes in the straw, sprinkling her face with pimples of light. Pink and pale-brown spots covered her face, anyway. Her eyes, too, were a pale—an almost extinct—brown, and red around the rims. Her shape was curious—a narrow, flat chest and swollen stomach, under layers of loose, pale clothing. The legs she stuck out into the sun were shiny and discolored and faintly cracked, like old plates.



"I didn't put my stockings on," she said. "I'm afraid I'm having rather a lazy day today. But aren't you the remarkable girl, coming all that way by yourself? Did you get Henry to help you carry the groceries up from the dock?"

Mrs. Montjoy waved to us. She was on her way to the tennis court, behind the Foleys' house. Every morning she gave Mary Anne a tennis lesson, and at lunch they discussed what Mary Anne was doing wrong.

"That's a woman who comes to play tennis," Mrs. Foley said. "She comes every day, so I suppose it's all right. She must be a very dedicated tennis player."

Mrs. Montjoy said to me later, "Did Mrs. Foley ask you to come over and sit on the grass?"

I said yes. "She thought I was somebody who brought the groceries."

"Oh, yes. That was during the war—a girl used to come in a boat. There hasn't been any grocery delivery in years. Mrs. Foley gets her wires crossed occasionally."

"She said you were a woman who came to play tennis."

"Did she really?" Mrs. Montjoy said.

THE work that I had to do here was nothing new for me. Like most country girls of my age, I could bake and iron, and clean an oven. This was the reason, in fact, that Mrs. Montjoy had sought out a country girl. In some ways the work was not as hard as it was at home. Nobody tracked barnyard mud into the kitchen, and there were no heavy men's work clothes to wrestle through the wringer and hang on the line. But there was the business of putting every pot and spoon back in its special place and cleaning the burners of the stove after every use, so that it looked as if nothing had ever been cooked there, and polishing the glass door leading to the deck so that the glass disappeared and people were in danger of smashing their faces against it.

The Montjoys' house was modern, built of golden-brown wood, with a flat roof, a deck extending over the edge of the water, and a great many windows, which Mrs. Montjoy would have liked to see as clean as the glass doors.

"But I have to be realistic," she said. "I know if you did that you'd be doing nothing else." She was not by any means a slave driver. Her tone with me was firm and slightly irritable, but that was the way it was with almost everybody. She was always on the lookout for incompetence, which she detested. "Sloppy" was a favorite word of condemnation. Others were "wishy-washy" and "unnecessary." A great many things that people said or did or felt were unnecessary, and some of these unnecessary things were wishy-washy. Other people might have used the word "arty," or "intellectual," or "permissive." Mrs. Montjoy swept all that away. Wishy-washy.

I ate my meals alone, at a table in the kitchen. Mrs. Montjoy and Mary Anne ate their lunch on the deck. I took their salad and sandwiches and drinks out to them, on a tray, and then I did not have to wait on them anymore. I read as I ate. I had found a stack of old magazines—*Life* and *Look* and *Time* and *Collier's*—at the back of the broom closet. I could tell that Mrs. Montjoy did not quite like the idea of my sitting reading these magazines as I ate my lunch. Was it because it was bad manners to read as you ate, or because I hadn't asked permission? More likely she saw my interest in such things as a subtle kind of impudence. Unnecessary.

All she said was "Those old magazines must be dreadfully dusty."

I said that I always wiped them off.

Sometimes a woman friend came over from one of the other islands, to play tennis and have lunch. I heard Mrs. Montjoy saying, ". . . have to keep your girls happy, or they'll be off to the Hotel, off to the Port. They can get jobs so easily, these days."

The other woman said, "That's so true."

"So you make allowances," Mrs. Montjoy said. "You do the best you can."

It took me a little while to understand that they were talking about me, that "girls" meant girls like me. I wondered, then, how was I being kept happy? By being allowed to read those magazines, by being taken along on the occasional alarming boat ride, when Mrs. Montjoy went to get our supplies? By being allowed to wear shorts and a blouse or even a halter, instead of a dark-blue uniform with white collar and cuffs such as Corrie wore?

And what hotel was this? What port?

"WHAT are you best at?" Mary Anne said. "What sports?"

"Well—volleyball," I said. We all had to play that, at school.

"Oh, I don't mean team sports," Mary Anne said. "I mean, what are you best at? Such as tennis? Or swimming or riding or what? My really best thing is riding, because that doesn't depend so much on your eyesight. Aunt Margaret's best used to be tennis and so was Nana's, and Granddad's was always sailing, and Daddy's is golf and Uncle Stewart's is sailing and golf, and Mother's is golf and swimming and sailing and tennis and everything, but maybe tennis a little bit the best of all. If my sister Jane hadn't died I'm not sure what hers would have been, but I think swimming, because she could already swim and she was only three."

I had never been on a tennis court. The idea of getting up on a horse or going out in a sailboat terrified me. I could barely swim. Golf was something that silly-looking men did in cartoons. The adults I knew sat down and rested whenever they were not working. That was not often.

"Everybody I know works too hard to do any of those things," I said. "We don't have a tennis court in our town. We don't have a golf course, either." (Actually, we had once had both, but there had been no money to keep them up in the thirties, and they had not been restored since.) "Nobody I know owns a sailboat."

I did not mention the hockey rink or the baseball park.

"Really?" said Mary Anne thoughtfully. "What do they do, then?"

"They work," I said. "And they never have any money. All of their lives."

I told her that most people never saw a flush toilet unless it was in a public building and that old people stayed in bed all winter (these were people too old to work) in order to keep warm. Children walked barefoot until the frost came, in order to save shoe leather, and died of stomach aches and fevers, because there was no money for a doctor. I said that sometimes people had eaten boiled grass for supper.

Not one of these statements—not even the one about boiled grass—was completely a lie. The one about flush toilets came closest to the truth, but it applied to country people—not town people—ten or twelve years earlier. But as I talked to Mary Anne, all the isolated incidents and bizarre circumstances I had heard about spread out in my mind, so that I almost believed that I myself had walked with bare, blue feet on frosty roads—I, who had been given cod-liver oil and inoculations and bundled up for school within an inch of my life, and had gone to bed hungry only because of a refusal to eat beef sausages or junket or bread pudding or liver. And this false impression I was giving seemed quite justifiable because of the real gulf that was there, that could never be made clear. What a difference there was, for instance, between the Montjoys' kitchen and the kitchen at home—but you couldn't explain the difference just by mentioning the worn-out linoleum of one and the perfectly shining surfaces of the other, or the fact that in one of them water was pumped into the sink from a cistern and in the other it came out of a tap. The fact was that one kitchen followed with absolute correctness an idea of what everybody's kitchen ought to be, and the other grew and changed, with improvisations and use, and belonged entirely to one family, to the years and decades of the family's life. And when I thought of that kitchen, with its blackened shelves behind the stove, the historical confusion deep in its cupboards, the smell of the barn clothes hung by the door, it seemed that I had to protect it from contempt—that I had to protect a whole precious and intimate though often unpleasant way of life from contempt, which I supposed to be nourished in the icy hearts of people like the Montjoys.

So I spun out the details of hardship and made no mention of the hired girls I had talked about to Mrs. Montjoy. I eliminated soft, drowsy Olive, whom I would have liked to please, but couldn't, because she lived in a fog of hymns and prophecies and curious prohibitions, also Annie, who marked the cups with lipstick and did her hair up in pin curls at night and kept a list of the boys she went out with, putting strange marks after their names—+ ++ ☆ O—and Mavis, who hung the clothes on the line in an eccentric way, by one corner or leg or sleeve. Hired girls had become a thing of the past, anyway, when I got old enough to manage part of the housework. And now my sister was old enough.

"That isn't fair," said Mary Anne. "That's awful." But then she added, "Why don't they go and catch some fish?"

"They haven't got any fishing rods."

"Couldn't they make some?"

"People who don't even need the fish have come and caught them all, anyway. For fun."

I thought that would keep her quiet, but she could not stop mulling over the problem. "Couldn't they go to the Salvation Army?"

"They're too proud," I said.

"Well, I feel sorry for them," Mary Anne said. "I feel sorry for them, but I think that's really stupid. What about the children? They ought to think about their children. Are the children too proud, too?"

"Everybody's proud," I said.

WHEN Mr. Montjoy came to the island on the weekends, there was always a great deal of noise and activity. Some of that was because there were visitors, who came by boat to swim or have drinks and watch sailing races. But a lot of it was generated by Mr. Montjoy himself. He had a loud, blustery voice and a clumsy body. Every weekend he turned red from the sun, and during every week the burned skin peeled away, leaving him splotchy and pink and muddy with freckles, ready to be burned again. When he took off his glasses you could see that one eye was quick and squinty and the other boldly blue but stupid-looking and moving jerkily, as if it had been caught in a trap.

His blustering was often about things that he had misplaced, or dropped, or bumped into. "Where the hell is the—?" he would say, or, "You didn't happen to see the—?," so it seemed that he had also misplaced, or failed to grasp in the first place, even the name of the thing he was looking for. To console himself he might grab up a handful of peanuts or pretzels—whatever was nearby—and eat them as if not noticing what he was doing. You felt that he might look at the empty bowl, the minute he had finished eating, and say, "Where the hell are the—?"

One morning I heard him say, "Now where the hell is my—?" when he was crashing around out on the deck.

"Your book?" said Mrs. Montjoy. She was out there having her morning coffee.

"I thought I had it out here," Mr. Montjoy said. "I was reading it."

"That Book-of-the-Month-Club book?" she said. "I think you left it in the living room."

She was right. I was vacuuming the living-room floor, and I had found a book pushed partway under the sofa. Its title was "Seven Gothic Tales." That made me want to see what it was about, so I opened it, and even as I listened to this conversation on the deck I was reading, holding the book open in one hand and guiding the vacuum cleaner with the other: " 'Nay, I speak from my heart,' said Mira. 'I have been trying for a long time to understand God. Now I have made friends with him. To love him truly you must love change, and you must love a joke, these being the true inclinations of his own heart. . . .' "

"There it is," said Mr. Montjoy. "Good girl, you found my book. Now I remember. I was reading it on the sofa last night."

"I just picked it up," I said. "It was on the floor."

He must have seen that I was reading it. "It's a queer kind of book," he said. "But sometimes you want to read a book that isn't like all the others."

"I couldn't make head or tail of it," said Mrs. Montjoy, coming in with the coffee tray. "We'll have to get out of the way here—Elsa has to get on with the vacuuming."

Mr. Montjoy went back to the city that evening. The next day I looked everywhere. I looked under the chairs and behind the curtains, in case he might have left the book behind. But I could not find it.

"I ALWAYS thought it would be nice to live up here all the year round, the way you people do," said Mrs. Foley. She must have been thinking again that I was the local girl who used to bring the groceries. Some days she said, "Now I know who you are. You're the new girl helping the Dutch woman in the kitchen, but I just can't recall your name," and other days she let me walk by without giving any greeting or showing the least sign of interest.

"We used to come up in the winter,"

she said. "Sometimes the bay was frozen over and there would be a road across the ice. We used to go snowshoeing. Now, can you tell me, why does nobody go snowshoeing anymore?"

She didn't wait for me to answer. She leaned toward me. "Can you tell me where Jane is?" she said with embarrassment, speaking almost in a whisper.

I said that I didn't know. She reached out a hand, perhaps to touch my face, and I drew back, so that the hand grazed my chest instead. It was a hot day, and I was wearing a halter. I felt her touch on my bare skin just where my breasts divided. Her hand was light and dry as a wood shaving.

"I'm sure it's all right," she said.

After that I didn't want to sit down beside her or speak to her again.

On a Saturday afternoon toward the end of August, the Montjoys gave a cocktail party. The party was given in honor of the friends they had staying with them that weekend—Mr. and Mrs. Hammond.

People arrived in motorboats and sailboats. Some of them went swimming, then sat around on the rocks in their bathing suits or lay on the dock in the sun. Others came up to the house immediately and started drinking and talking in the living room or out on the deck. Some children had come with their parents, and some by themselves, in their own boats. These were not children of Mary Anne's age—Mary Anne had been taken to stay with her friend Susan, on another island—but of mine. Girls and boys fifteen or sixteen years old. They spent most of the afternoon in the water, diving and shouting and having races to the raft.

Mrs. Montjoy and I had been busy since early morning, making all the different things to eat, which we now arranged on platters and offered to these people. This was fiddly and exasperating work—stuffing various mixtures into mushroom caps, sticking one tiny slice of something on top of a tiny slice of something on top of a precise fragment of toast or bread. All the shapes had to be perfect and of exactly the same size—perfect rounds, perfect squares, perfect triangles, perfect diamonds. Mrs. Hammond came into the kitchen several times and admired what we were doing.

"How gorgeous everything looks," she said. "You notice I'm not even offering to help. It would just be a joke, I'm hopeless."

I liked the way she said that. I admired her husky voice, its weary, humorous tone. *I'm hopeless.* I wished I were her, in a sleek, black bathing suit with a tan like dark toast, shoulder-length dark hair, and an exotic orchid lipstick, constantly reapplied. She did not look happy, but her air of complaint and sullenness seemed glamorous to me, her hints of cloudy drama enviable. She and her husband were an altogether different kind of rich people from Mr. and Mrs. Montjoy. They were more like the people I had already met in magazine stories and in books like "The Hucksters"—people who drank a lot, had love affairs, went to psychiatrists. Her name was Carol and her husband's name was Ivan. I already thought of them by their first names—something I had never been tempted to do with the Montjoys.

Mrs. Montjoy had asked me to put on a dress, so I wore the pink-and-white striped cotton, with the smudged material around its waist tucked under the elasticized belt. Nearly everybody else was in shorts or even in bathing suits. I passed among them, offering food. I was not sure how to do this. Sometimes people were talking or laughing so busily that they didn't notice me. I had to say, "Excuse me—would you like one of these?" in a very determined voice, to get their attention. Then they looked startled and amused. "Why, thank you," they said, as if my interruption were a further joke.

"Enough passing for now, Elsa," Mrs. Montjoy said.

She gathered up some glasses and asked me to wash them. "People never keep track of their own—it's easier just to keep giving them fresh ones," she said. "Also it's time to get the meatballs out of the fridge and heat them. Could you watch the oven?"

While I was busy in the kitchen I heard Mrs. Hammond calling, "Ivan! Ivan!" She was roaming through the back rooms of the house. But Mr. Hammond had come in through the kitchen door that led to the woods. He stood there and did not answer her.

He came over to the counter and poured gin into his glass.

"Oh, Ivan, there you are," said Mrs. Hammond, coming in from the hall.

"Here I am," said Mr. Hammond.

"Where else?" she said. "Me, too." She handed him her glass.

Mr. Hammond set her glass down and pushed the gin bottle toward her. He spoke to me. He said, "Are you having any fun, Minnie?"

Mrs. Hammond gave a yelp of laughter. "Minnie. Where did you get the idea her name was Minnie? Her name is Elsa."

"Elsa," said Mr. Hammond. "Are you having fun, Elsa?"

"Oh, yes," I said. I was busy lifting the cookie sheet with the meatballs on it out of the oven and hadn't taken any time with my reply. I immediately wished I had matched his sarcastic tone. I could have said, "Yes, *indeed.*"

"I swam around the point," said Mrs. Hammond. "I'm working up to swimming around the entire island."

Mr. Hammond said, "Good."

"Well, then," said Mrs. Hammond. "I'll leave you to it."

I had begun to spear the meatballs with toothpicks and arrange them on a platter. Mr. Hammond said, "Care for some help?" and tried to do the same, but his toothpicks missed and sent the meatballs skittering onto the counter.

"Well, Elsa," he said. Then, as if he could not follow his thought further, he simply repeated himself. "Well, Elsa."

I knew something about him. I knew that the Hammonds were here for a special holiday because Mr. Hammond had lost his job. Mary Anne had told me this. "He's depressed about it," she had said. He did not seem depressed to me. He seemed impatient—chiefly with Mrs. Hammond—but quite pleased with himself. He was tall, he had dark hair combed straight back, and a dark, thin mustache, and I had noticed that when people talked to him he had a way of leaning slightly toward them, as if what they had to say might be very important. The word that described this, in my mind, was "courtly."

"Where do you go swimming, Minnie? Do you go swimming?"

"Down by the boathouse," I said. I thought he must have said "Minnie" for a joke.

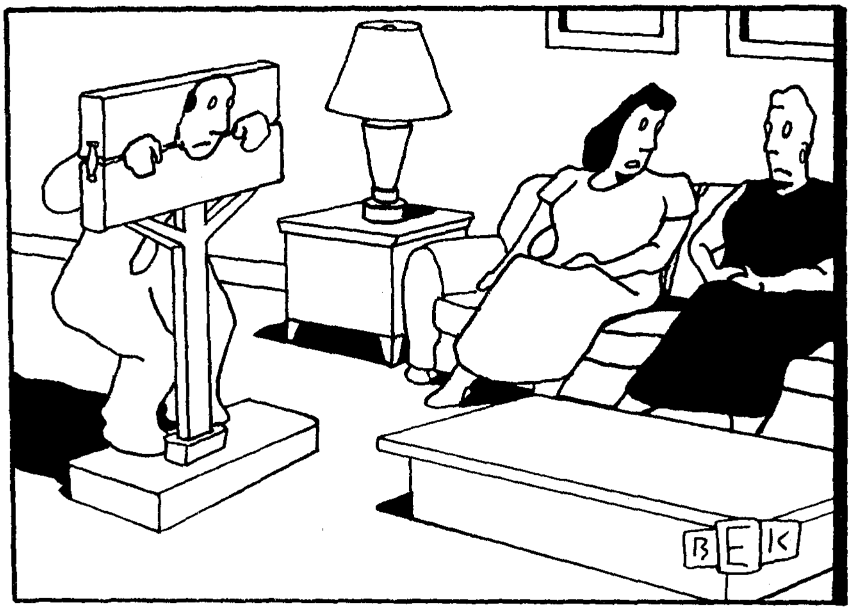
"Is that a good place?"

I said yes. It was good for me, because I had never, before this summer, swum in water that was over my head, and I liked being close to the dock.

"Do you ever go in without your bathing suit?"

"No."

"You should try it," he said.



"We have an arrangement."

Mrs. Montjoy came through the living-room doorway, asking if the meatballs were ready.

"This is certainly a hungry crowd," she said. "It's the swimming does it. How are you getting on, Ivan? Carol was just looking for you."

"She was here," said Mr. Hammond.

Mrs. Montjoy dropped parsley here and there among the meatballs. "Now, Elsa," she said. "I think you've done about all you need to here. I think I can manage now. Why don't you make yourself a sandwich and run along down to the boathouse."

I said I wasn't hungry. Mr. Hammond had disappeared into the back part of the house.

"Well, you'd better take something," Mrs. Hammond said. "You might be hungry later."

She meant that I was not to come back.

On my way to the boathouse I met a couple of the guests—girls of my own age, barefoot and in their bathing suits, breathlessly laughing. They had probably swum partway around the island, climbed out of the water at the boathouse dock, and were sneaking back to surprise somebody. They stepped aside when they saw me but did not quite stop laughing. They made way for my body without looking at me. They were the kind of girls who would have squealed and made a fuss over me if I had been a dog or a cat.

The noise of the party continued for a long time. It was too early, anyway, to go to sleep. I put on my bathing suit and climbed down the ladder into the water and swam around a bit, gradually working up a fantasy about Mr. Hammond. It was not impossible, I thought, that he would come looking for me. And then what? A first touch, I supposed, then kisses, hot pressures, limbs twining in the water, like ribbons of light. The thought of touching a man that old—forty? forty-five?—disturbed me, though I knew I would get pleasure from it. It was like knowing you would get pleasure from touching a crocodile. Mr. Hammond's—Ivan's—skin might be smooth, but his age and his knowledge and his desired corruptness would sit on it like invisible warts and scales.

I let the straps of my bathing suit down, I let my breasts float free. I swam that way, with the water sweetly dividing at my nipples, gliding over my skin. I even dared to lift myself out of the water, though it wasn't dark yet. Holding to the dock with one hand I bobbed up and down and rose into the light like a mermaid, wet and gleaming, with nobody to see.

Then I heard steps—I heard somebody coming. I sank down into the water, by the dock. I held still.

For just a minute I believed that it was Mr. Hammond and that I had actually entered the world of secret signals, lovers' meetings, ruthless desires. I shrank against the dock, horrified and submissive. Then the boathouse light was switched on, and I turned around, noiselessly, carefully, in the water—no longer sure that I would see Mr. Hammond but not sure that I wouldn't see him, either—and there was old Mr. Foley, in his baggy white pants, with his back to me, moving something around on the tool shelf. Earlier that afternoon he had appeared at the party, in his yachtsman's cap and blazer. He had stayed for one drink and explained that Mrs. Foley could not bear the strain of seeing so many people but sent her best to all.

He found what he wanted, or put back what he had taken away earlier, and switched off the light, and left. He never noticed that I was there.

I pulled up my bathing suit and climbed out of the water and went up the stairs. My body seemed such a weight to me that when I got to the top I was short of breath.

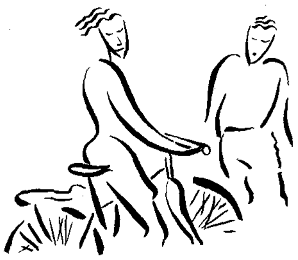
The sound of the cocktail party went on. To hold my own against it, I started to write a letter to my friend Eleanor, at home. She was the sort of friend with whom I nearly always talked about sex. I described the party in derogatory terms and spoke of Mr. Hammond as a letch, though I added that he was very good-looking. I said that he had nudged me and fondled me in the kitchen when my hands were occupied with the meatballs, and later he had followed me down to the boathouse and made a determined attack. But I had kicked him and freed myself and he had gone away. *Scurried away* was what I said.

"So hold your breath for the next installment—'The Kitchen Maid's Adventures,' or 'Ravaged on the Rocks of Georgian Bay,' " I wrote. I realized the next day that I should have written "ravished" not "ravaged," but it was all right, Eleanor would not know the difference.

"MRS. FOLEY asked me where Jane was," I said to Mrs. Montjoy. We were polishing the silver—I was polishing it and she was standing beside me, inspecting it. All the knives and forks and spoons had to be polished before we left the island. "I didn't know who she meant. Was Jane one of the girls who worked here some other summer?"

"Jane was my other daughter," said

Slow down!



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Mrs. Montjoy. "She was Mary Anne's sister. She's dead."

"Oh, I didn't know," I said. "Oh, that's too bad."

"Well. It's some time ago now."

"Did she die of polio?" I said cautiously. In those days children still died of polio, every summer.

"No," said Mrs. Montjoy. "She was killed when I moved the corner cupboard in my bedroom. I was looking for my bracelet. I didn't really think it would be there, but I thought I'd look. One of the casters caught on the rug, and the whole thing toppled down on her, and she was killed."

I knew all this, of course. Mary Anne had told me all of it. I knew it the way I knew such things then—the black holes, the horrors that seemed essential in the drama I required of life.

"That's terrible," I said. "I'm terribly sorry." In my guilt, in my queasy triumph, I let a fork slip through my fingers, to the floor.

Mrs. Montjoy picked it up. "Remember to wash this," she said. "It was nothing to do with you, Elsa. It was just one of those things."

At that time I didn't recognize brutality in myself, or boorishness. I thought I had the right—the right to barge in, stir up feelings, demand intimacy, or at least attention. I thought myself blameless, beyond judgment, in my dealings with Mrs. Montjoy. Because I was young and poor and knew about Nausicaä. I didn't have the grace or fortitude to be a servant.

On my last Sunday I was alone in the boathouse, packing up my things in the suitcase that had gone with my mother and father on their wedding trip. When I pulled it out from under my cot and opened it, here, it smelled of home—of the closet at the end of the upstairs hall where it usually sat, close to the mothballed winter coats and the fox-fur scarf and the rubber sheet once used on children's beds. But when you got it out at home it always smelled faintly of train trips and cities where *many* buildings were still heated by coal—of travel.

I heard steps on the path, a stumbling step into the boathouse, a rapping on the wall. It was Mr. Montjoy.

"Are you up there, Elsa? Are you up there?"

His voice was boisterous, jovial, as it was when he had been drinking. There were friends at the Montjoys' house, toasting the end of summer. I came to the top of the stairs. He put a hand on the wall to steady himself. A boat had gone by out in the channel and sent little waves into the boathouse.

"See here, Elsa," said Mr. Montjoy, looking up at me with his fierce, trapped eye. "See here—I thought I might as well bring this down and give it to you."

It was a book he was handing to me, "Seven Gothic Tales."

"Because I saw you were looking at it that day," he said. "It seemed to me you were interested in it. So I thought, Well, you might as well have it."

"Thank you," I said.

"I thought when I finished it I might as well pass it along to you. It just occurred to me. You *might enjoy it.*"

"Thank you very much."

"That's all right. I just thought you might enjoy it."

"Yes," I said. But very little of the joy I felt got into my voice. I was too surprised at first, then, very quickly, hardly surprised at all. Once I got my hands on the book, I felt as if it had always belonged to me.

"Well, then. I hope you will."

Mary Anne had once said to me, "Daddy used to be poor like you. He grew up in a little place somewhere near Ottawa, and his father was a doctor, but he died. So Daddy had to work his way through university. Nana didn't think Mother should marry him at first but Granddad said he was too smart to stay poor for very long."

I was not sure I was going to give anybody whose father had been a doctor the credit for being poor.

He left the boathouse, and I went back upstairs and pushed the suitcase aside and sat down on the cot. I opened the book just anywhere, and began to read.

"The walls of the room had once been painted crimson, but with time the color had faded into a richness of hues, like a glassful of dying red roses. . . . Some potpourri was being burned on the tall stove, on the sides of which Neptune, with a trident, steered his team of horses through high waves."

Reading this, I felt as if I had just been rescued from my life. Words could become a burning-glass for me in those days, and no shame of my nature or condition could hold out among the flares of pleasure. ♦

THE CRITICS

BOOKS

BUSTER KEATON IN HELL

BY CRAIG SELIGMAN

My Idea of Fun
by Will Self
(Atlantic Monthly Press; $21)

IT didn't take Will Self long to stir up London. Two books in two years—a collection of stories, in 1991, and a pair of novellas, in 1992—drew mountains of praise from the literary establishment and sealed his reputation for mischief. His first full-length novel, "My Idea of Fun," came out the following year and is now making its appearance on this side of the Atlantic. Self's notoriety, bolstered by his well-known heroin use, rests on a foundation of bone-dry outrageousness. He flourishes the kind of superhip cynicism that allows a writer to make fun of sensitive targets—women and minority groups—and get away with it because the bigots are merely his characters, and, besides, everybody else gets savaged, too. It isn't prejudice, just misanthropy. Bile does have its glamour, but still there's something dubious about a writer who, describing a deflowering in which the seducer is an impassioned Jew, can wrest out a shattered-window metaphor—the "vitrified hymen" has been "broken into shards"—and then add, "A bizarre inversion of *Kristallnacht* indeed." The first time I encountered that wisecrack, I wasn't aware that Self's mother was Jewish—a circumstance that I suppose makes his little stab at a Holocaust joke less stupefying. But it doesn't make it any funnier. And that's the real trouble with Self's straight-faced effrontery: the jokes, the absurdities, the insults, and the horrors sit on your palate like ashes.

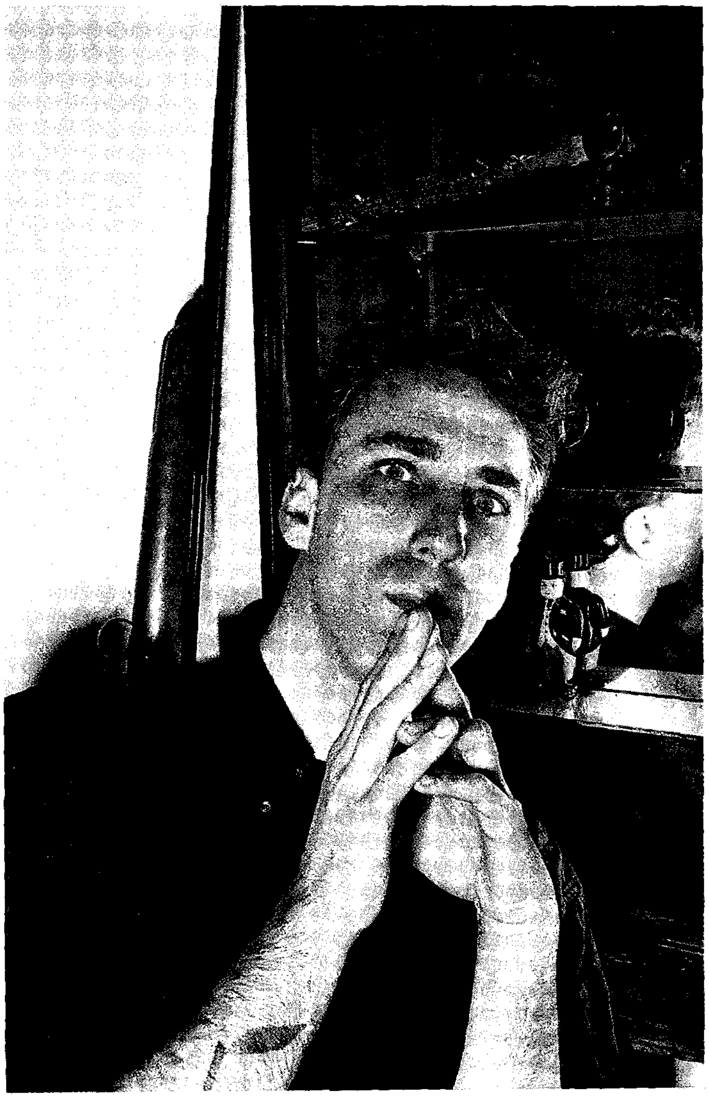
Deadpan is an art of self-discipline, and Self isn't lazy. Both his language and his research can be meticulous. The method that he developed in his story collection, "The Quantity Theory of Insanity" (which Atlantic will be bringing out here in a few months), had a lot of comic promise. Basically, he takes a bizarre or loony notion and coats it with so many down-to-earth details that finally the notion seems almost credible. A bereaved son in "The North London Book of the Dead" encounters his deceased mother on a London street: "She was wearing a sort of bluish, tweedish long jacket and black slacks and carrying a Barnes & Noble book bag, as well as a large handbag and a carrier bag from Waitrose. She had a CND badge in her lapel and was observing the world with a familiar 'there will be tears before bedtime' sort of expression." You can't get much more workaday than that (although her description of the afterlife—"When you die you move to another part of London, that's all there is to it. Period"—comes close). Two of the stories are written in what may be the ultimate deadpan—academic prose. A piece of mock anthropology called "Understanding the Ur-Bororo" discusses a tribe of South American Indians whose cultural hallmark is their crushing banality. The title story, which even has a bibliography tacked on, elucidates the hypothesis that there is only a certain amount of sanity to go around. ("If you provide efficient medication for manic depressives in the Fens, there are perceptible variations in the numbers of agoraphobics on the South Coast.") The tone of both stories is so starchy that an inattentive reader could fail to notice that there are jokes in them.

How can it be, then, that, as Self declared in a book review last year, his foremost comic inspiration has been Woody Allen? Actually, the claim isn't as outlandish as it appears. Allen is a parodist, too—a giddier one, but English taste in humor does run toward the dry. And there is another affinity. "Although I was profoundly deracinated," Self wrote, Allen had "become the touchstone of whatever semitism I accorded myself." I would never have guessed from reading Self that he was a Jew (I probably would have assumed he was an anti-Semite), but the kinship with Allen helps to account for a strain of nutty Allen-style jokes that boing out at you bewilderingly throughout the collection. Some of them hit, some miss, but even the best ones seem ill at ease in their surroundings. By the time Self's next book, "Cock & Bull," appeared in England, in 1992 (and here the following year), the traces of Allen had disappeared or been absorbed. This one was pure Will Self, which made it even more impressive—and more repellent.

"Cock" and "Bull" are two supremely high-concept black comedies: in the first, a woman grows a penis, and in the second a man wakes up with a peculiar swelling below the pit of his knee, which turns out to be a fresh new vagina. The ideas are as out there as they are obvious, and although at the conceptual level both works go spinning out of control (frighteningly, in the case of "Cock"), at the level of language the control is disturbingly cool. Self reports on the development of Carol's penis in "Cock" with such physicianly detachment that the development, and not the penis, becomes the focus. And it's largely through a physician's eyes that we see Bull's vagina.

Funny and horrifying can be a delectable combination, but in "Cock" Self pushes the horror with such ghoulish single-mindedness that by a point long before the end there isn't any funny left. Carol is a mousy, rather dim housewife when she notices the little penis growing between her legs; once she's had a good hit of testosterone, she turns into a homicidal rapist. Andrea Dworkin could have invented her. Not that Self's biological determinism is particularly feminist; on the whole, he seems to find women less hateful than men, but what he really gets off on is showing both sexes (he treats them generically) at their worst. He takes each awful impulse in his characters as far as it will go—as though his refusal to flinch before the ugliness that results were a mark of courage rather than bad taste. But, as Pauline Kael once said, total satire is opportunistic and easy. What's difficult is to stand up and defend something you believe in without making a fool of yourself. Self's cynicism isn't courage—it's the easy way out.

"Bull" is funnier. The hero starts off as a simple, harmless lummox, but, where Carol's penis makes her a monster, Bull's vagina awakens a dormant vulnerability. He becomes as attractively troubled as a character out of James—complicated at last, and sweetly, comically feminine. In Self's eyes, Bull isn't much more than the butt of a dirty joke, but the lack of authorial sympathy makes a reader sympathize with him even more.



Will Self's notoriety rests on a foundation of bone-dry outrageousness.

DAVID GAMBLE

The running joke in "Bull" is that the tale is a comedy of heterosexual lust even though the lovers are both men. Alan Margoulies, Bull's doctor and debaucher, behaves like the worst kind of dehumanizing male pig—he falls not for Bull the person but for "the cutest little snatch he'd ever clapped eyes on." Of course, the subtext does have to do with homosexuality. Alan and Bull present an absurd parody of two men discovering their gay side, one the butch denier ("I'm not queer, I'm just not"), the other the sensitive femme at last recognizing certain facets of himself that he has always sensed but never acknowledged. Psychologically, it's a drag show with screamingly crook drag. The lovers' first wild coupling—"Alan was transported. Bull *was* all woman to him"—is the one passage Self has written that made me laugh out loud. Usually, his basilisk glare turns intercourse into something so gross that it doesn't even rise to the eroticism of pornography, but this time the passion kindles a mad heat that neither man can understand or resist. It's not exactly arousing, but at least Self isn't demanding that you hate everything on the page in front of you; for once, the humor is laced with affection.

Oddly, though, the laughter that lightens "Bull" also undermines it. The novella bears the subtitle "A Farce," and at every juncture where it tries to deepen, Self resolutely wrenches the action back toward the surface. That's a loss, since "Bull," unlike "Cock," is sitting astride a lode of rich thematic ore. Self has made Bull such a rounded character that his story strives toward fullness: it begs for the nourishment of psychology and reflection; it wants to become a novel. And Self won't let it. His sensibility registers any act of generosity toward his characters (or his readers) as a compromise, and he squashes it like a roach. So "Cock" and "Bull" become companion pieces in another respect: twin demonstrations of an author beating down his best impulses in the interest of his art, and killing the art.

THE characters Self writes about—like Bull, who at Alan's advances "felt his capacity for action surgically removed"—are a passive, volitionless bunch. Misha Gurney, the art therapist hired to work with the deranged in the story "Ward 9," accepts the mysterious drugs the ward nurse proffers him, notes their strange effect on his will, and, when he learns that he has been demoted from therapist to patient, responds with an eerie lack of interest: "I want to get back upstairs . . . and lie on my bed. I need a cigarette." He's a creepier version of Slump, the cartoon sluggard Self developed for *The New Statesman* in the early eighties, who literally never got out of bed. ("Someday son," Slump dreamed of telling his future offspring, "all this apathy will be yours.") Sometimes, as in "Ward 9" or "Cock," the moral stupor is drug-induced, but often it develops from nothing more than "a strange sense of inertia." Nietzsche's contention that human beings would rather will nothingness than not will doesn't apply to Self's characters; they'd rather not will. These listless oddballs live at a remove both sensory and psychic, the world around them strangely muted and their own personalities so indistinct that they barely have identities at all. Unsure of who they are, and often crippled by the question, they're content to let someone else—someone active, confident, and frequently malicious—do their thinking. Hence Self's people fall into two groups, perpetrators and victims; one is repulsive and the other is contemptible.

Ian Wharton, the protagonist of "My Idea of Fun," is the prototypical Will Self character: he has no will and he has no self. At thirteen, he drifts under the tutelage of a rotund, orotund Satan by the name of Broadhurst, and, though that's only Chapter 2, it's pretty much the end of the story: he never drifts out. (The action continues for a good decade and a half.) Soul-selling tales, from "Dr. Faustus" to "Damn Yankees," are parables of moral choice, but Ian doesn't have the wherewithal to make a choice. There's no struggle for his soul—there's barely a soul to struggle for.

The popular Satan we grew up with is a fire spirit, lithe and witty; Broadhurst is a seedy, grandiloquent windbag. Self is still perversely bent on reducing the amazing to the humdrum, and some of the epithets for Broadhurst—"the Magus of the Quotidian," "the Dharma Body of the Dull"—would suit his creator, too. His idea of fun is removing the fun. The notion of selling your soul carries with it the glamour of danger, riches, and delicious, forbidden sex. But Broadhurst—or The Fat Controller, as he insists that Ian call him—doesn't offer any of these lures. The single temptation that he holds out is the one that Self's creatures find irresistible: someone to take them in hand and make their decisions for them.

"I am the very Lama of Lost Souls," The Fat Controller pontificates. "I reduce the human to the material, utterly and completely." In Self's view, the times have already done that, and part of his aim is to satirize Thatcherite and post-Thatcherite consumerism. Ian does a business course at Sussex University and chooses marketing as his profession; he is the kind of boor who, with a few more years under his belt, could collar a young idealist at a party and bray at him that the future is in plastics. At least, he's supposed to be. But something unexpected happens when Ian talks about his work: he becomes engaged. His tone brightens with an echo of Bull's love of sport, with a happy enthusiasm that Self can't deface with a sneer. In general, Self is amazingly unself-conscious about his superiority; he describes Bull's weekend rugby team, for example, as a group of "solid young men, quantity surveyors, actuaries, the odd dentist or retail services manager adding a hint of cosmopolitanism." Though he tries to pass off his contempt for Ian as an artist's revulsion at a money-grubber, what I hear is an Oxbridge intellectual sniffing at a red-brick-university professional.

Besides, if he's really lambasting late-twentieth-century materialism, why hasn't he given us—or Ian—any alternative? It's loading the dice to offer your readers a Devil but no God. Self toys at length with the notion of evil, but it doesn't mean much without his telling us what he thinks is good. "So what's your idea of fun then?" a woman asks Ian at the dinner party that opens the novel, and Ian reflects that it might be ripping the head off an old tramp and copulating with the severed neck. That's a notion of evil derived, like several of the novel's ketchup-smeared set pieces, from "Halloween III." But you would hardly call it tempting. There's about as much allure in the crimes that Ian and The Fat Controller commit along the way—throttling a cabdriver, torturing a dog, poking a pair of eyeballs out—as there is in pulling wings off flies. "No, no, there's no fun any more, just my idea of it," Ian mopes on the long dark night that he tells us his history. The sentiment echoes the bleak ending of Flannery O'Connor's short story "A Good Man Is Hard to Find," in which a homicidal maniac named The Misfit snarls "No pleasure but meanness" a moment before he shoots an old lady to death. The snarl is hollow, and he knows it: like Ian, he has answered the absence of God with a monumental savagery, and all that it's brought him is a monumental despair. When his dumb sidekick cries "Some fun!" after the old lady's death, he snaps, "Shut up, Bobby Lee." And then he adds soberly, "It's no real pleasure in life."

Self's excited descriptions of torture and blood lust might place him in Bobby Lee's camp if they ever ignited. They don't. He is caught in a bind more common to filmmakers than to writers: if the brutality is a turn-on it's immoral, and if it's a turn-off it risks being dull. I would have preferred immoral; no fun isn't much of a hook to hang a novel on. ◆

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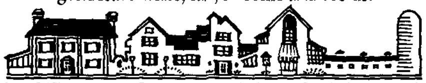

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MUSICAL EVENTS

LOVING TOO WELL

BY PAUL GRIFFITHS

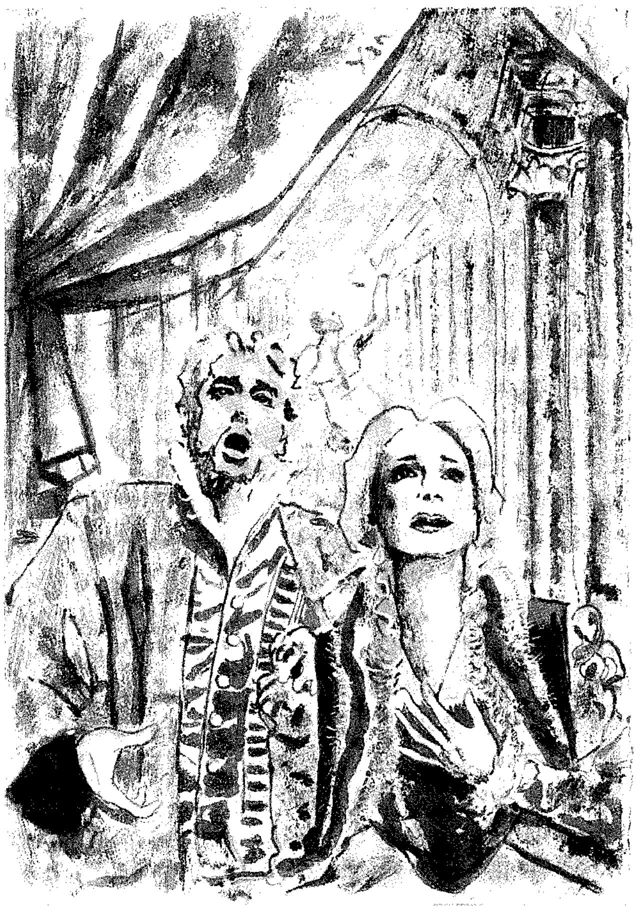
THERE are softer ways of suffering than to be up there singing Otello, but this is the public purgatory Plácido Domingo has chosen, and you have to admire him for it. You also have to admire the achievement, as well as the simple fact, of his performance in the new Met production of Verdi's opera—an achievement all the more fascinating, moving, and meaningful for its edge of frustration and distaste. His characteristic bright ring is proudly there, in his first appearance and in much that follows, but it seems not to be coming easily to him; it has to be striven for. It even seems an artifice he would rather be without, and which perhaps the character would rather be without. After all, the Othello story is rooted in the myth of the noble African, and the voice of that myth is cavernous and bass: Olivier, when he played the role, seemed to be speaking from the very bottom of his lungs. Verdi's setting of the part for a tenor was perhaps culturally forced, since only a Russian composer could have imagined a bass Othello and a tenor Iago. But, at the same time, the contradiction of the archetype has rich repercussions. Otello is assigned a voice not ideally adequate to his purposes; he'd rather not be singing to us in this way. Mr. Domingo makes that voice the voice of the inner man: Otello as subtext to Othello's text. When the character exhibits power, at his arrival or in breaking up the sword fight, Mr. Domingo shows not only the charisma but the fragility, the nervousness, the insecurity that have to be there for Iago's scheme to work. When he exhibits affection for Desdemona, the warmth and the gentleness are cut with worry, perhaps even with self-doubt. At other points, the sense of strain can produce either intensity or an exquisite discomfort, but always it is true to the expressive moment. The command holds, superbly. And if we begin to notice the cost we notice it not at all as vocal deficiency but as the cost exacted by the score from the wretched victim it makes its chief character.

Just once, in the terrifying monologue in the middle of the third act, Mr. Domingo takes the opportunity of low-lying and quiet music ("voce soffocata" is Verdi's marking) to leave aside the demands of heroic brilliance and appear vocally naked. There are no fronts or delusions now, no gap between what the character wants to sing and what he sings. Text and subtext are one, and the voice of both is, in Mr. Domingo's performance, bleak, grim, and heavily baritonal, revealing the raw grain of the wood, without the polish.

The purpose of the evening was to honor Mr. Domingo on the silver anniversary of his first appearance with the company, and honor him it did, as much as he honored it. Originally, a new production by John Schlesinger had been intended, but that plan was dropped at almost the eleventh hour, on the ground that William Dudley's set would have been too complicated for the necessary shuffle of a repertory house. At that juncture, with less than a year to go before opening night, the Met had to find something proved: hence the invitation to the director Elijah Moshinsky and the set designer Michael Yeargan, who had staged the work for Covent Garden. The result, while not quite a remake of the London production, has many of the same features, including the feel of Venetian painting, not so much in the huge art works actually on display—which oddly suggest Siena (a crucifix in the first act) or Rome (a faintly Michelangelesque exertion of some sort in the second) and wreathe the production in a faint sniff of religiosity—but decisively in the look of the stage: the immense neoclassical columns that reflect Carpaccio's spacious vistas; the Gentile Bellini-like luminosity of the second act, with its blue sky and huge white awning; the Titianesque sumptuousness of color and texture in Peter J. Hall's costumes

(Titian hair, too, for Desdemona). Here the production follows the librettist's vision, for Boito wrote to Verdi hoping that Carpaccio and Bellini might inform the costumes. More to the point, Mr. Yeargan and Mr. Hall provide a feast of visual splendor. When the Venetian ambassadors arrive, in the third act, they do so as a strong forward wave of crimson brocade and fur, shamelessly spectacular.

Shamelessness and spectacle are also what Mr. Moshinsky is about. His handling of the big choral scenes is extravagantly busy and brilliantly managed: the slicing apart of the curtains at the beginning immediately reveals a proscenium filled with activity in an exhilarating chiaroscuro—activity going on right up to a top level of soldiers and cannons. Exactly what kind of structure is being represented here is unclear, just as the architectural purpose of the grand columns is never fully explicit. But the function of the sets is not to portray a city (in any event, there's not much aura of Carpaccio in Famagusta); it's to provide sufficient space and splendor for action or, contrariwise, for the effective stillness, emptiness, and isolation of the more intimate scenes. In these, Otello and Desdemona are often pinned against the base of a pillar; Duane Schuler's lighting examines them mercilessly. Only Iago has the freedom to wander and lean.



Plácido Domingo and Carol Vaness in the Met's new production of Verdi's "Otello."

Iago is our master of ceremonies; "Otello" is his theatre. In a much admired production that Peter Stein made for Welsh National Opera, it literally was so, in that Iago could stand outside a great box containing all the other characters. Mr. Moshinsky's realization is much more in the line of Met-style lavish naturalism, but it exacerbates that style to a point where naturalism becomes neat artifice. Not only do the set's columns have no architectural reality but the movement of the crowd is sharply choreographed (not least in the fight, directed by B. H. Barry, which for a few seconds looks like fifty pinball machines in action at once), and the expanse and the lighting together focus on the principal characters as performers. Iago moves with ease and casualness in this painted, harsh-lit world: he seems to claim the follow spot, not have it dog him; he's the one for whom the others perform.

The production is fortunate in having in Sergei Leiferkus a Iago who can express the ruler not only by demeanor but also by being effortlessly in control of his vocal equipment. His gentlemanly correctness—the way he sounds as if he had just swallowed a pebble but were far too well bred to let such a vulgar mishap discommode him—begins by seeming perhaps even too finely modulated: evil, one may feel, ought to spit more, be more scarred. But this Iago isn't evil, except in being the supreme manager. What delights him is regulation, efficiency, the ability to manipulate scenes and emotions. The "Credo," in which Mr. Leiferkus does bare his tone and show us some vocal fangs, seems an act, a momentary slip into performance rather than observation, necessitated by the score but not by the drama we're in.

Carol Vaness's Desdemona is a less effective piece of casting. She's a mettlesome stage personality, not used or suited to presenting what Verdi insisted was "the type of goodness, resignation, self-sacrifice!" She gives the appearance of a precarious restraint: left to herself, she'd surely be clouting Otello back, and scorning his jealousy in a huge D-minor aria. Nor is it just a matter of how she looks and acts, for there's an evident carefulness, too, in her singing. She can produce beautiful sequences of rounded, gleaming melody in the middle-high register, soft and yet carrying; but the notes have to be held in place and warily balanced. It's a near-miracle that they almost always are, but one can't quite believe in the purity, and without purity Desdemona doesn't have very much personality or, indeed, point.

The other parts are paltry in this cruel opera—this opera that's cruel by no means only to its titular hero. They're adequately done. The conducting is far more than adequate. Valery Gergiev, normally associated with Russian repertory, proves that he can be just as passionate in and about Verdi, and there are moments, notably the close of the third act, when the passion he encourages in the orchestra threatens to drown out even a stageful of voices. Detail is zealously brought forward; sometimes rather ordinary music is obliged to come up with some significance. The chorus interests him less, and his tempos in the first act can leave voices hurrying behind. But the orchestra, in its display, equals the savage magnificence we're witnessing onstage. ◆

First, Kevin Costner agreed to go west and play the title role in "Wyatt Earp." Now Kurt Russell has agreed to do the same in "Tombstone."—*Peoria Journal Star.*

It must be one of those underground movies.

POSTSCRIPT

EUGÈNE IONESCO

BY JOHN LAHR

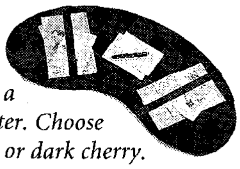
Eugène Ionesco, who died last week, was an entrepreneur of his own uncertainties. "There are no alternatives," he said about his first, short play, "The Bald Soprano" (1950). "If man is not tragic, he is ridiculous and painful, 'comic' in fact, and by revealing his absurdity one can achieve a sort of tragedy." Giddy with a sense of absence and of abdication, Ionesco's plays sounded a new note of frivolity at the beginning of the fifties which tweaked both the committed ideologues of the left and the boulevardiers of the right, and pushed theatre beyond the boundaries of logic and sociology. His plays often spoke in hilarious non sequiturs ("The Bald Soprano"; "The Lesson," 1951; "The Chairs," 1952), in the crazy symmetry of dreams ("Victims of Duty," 1953), and in fantastical transformations ("Amédée, or How to Get Rid of It," 1954; "Rhinoceros," 1960)—and they all announced a refusal to suffer while acting out the dislocation and the strange emptiness he found in the world.

Born in Romania in 1912, Ionesco spent most of his first thirteen years in France, dreaming alternately of being a saint and a warrior. Between the ages of thirteen and twenty-seven, he lived in Romania, and then he returned to Paris to live and write in his second language. His estrangement from his native tongue gave him a feeling for the confusion created by language and its inadequacy to make sense of reality, and also left him with an exile's rootlessness, which comes across in the floating world of his plays. His first experience of theatre, he wrote in 1958, was in Paris: growing up near the Luxembourg Gardens, he frequently watched puppet shows there. "I could stay there, entranced for whole days . . . spellbound by the sight of these puppets that talked, moved and clubbed each other. It was the spectacle of the world itself." Ionesco's plays, with their surrealist narratives and acid thoughts, almost immediately embroiled him with the literary establishment. "I think that writers like Sartre, Osborne, Miller, Brecht, etc., are simply the new *auteurs du boulevard,* representatives of a left-wing conformism which is just as lamentable as the right-wing sort," Ionesco, an anarchist in the face of all orthodoxies, wrote.

Ionesco was a pint-size renegade. He had a clown's face—a rutted forehead and a bald pate that gave him a memorably comical double-dome appearance. It seemed apt that he wrote clown plays that disguised their intellect and insolence in the high jinks of visual surprise. "The theatre is the appearance of the unexpected," he said. His best jokes were sight gags whose impact was multiplied by a comic exaggeration and conveyed, in lucid metaphors, an almost childlike appreciation of life's weirdness. In "The Chairs," the stage is inundated with a whirlwind of seats for an invisible audience, which never comes to hear an orator who turns out to be mute; in "Amédée," Ionesco's first full-length play, a couple share their apartment with a corpse (a symbol of their dead love), which gets bigger and bigger; in "Rhinoceros," an allegory of totalitarian conformity, the world proliferates with rhinos. Ionesco's theatrical world was one of danger, disconnection, and daring. "Personally, I regard existence as a misfortune," he said. Ionesco was a kind of Zanni of remorse. As he lets a character in "Jack, or the Submission" (1955) sing, "There's no one else like me on earth / I'm full of light and gloom and mirth." ♦

PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD AVEDON

Paris, January 27, 1959.



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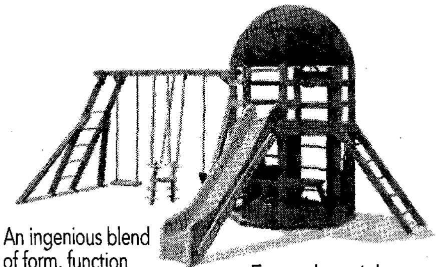

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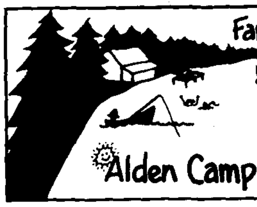

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THE CURRENT CINEMA

LOOKING FOR LOVE

BY TERRENCE RAFFERTTY

ROBERT DEMICHIELI

It's amazing to think that a filmmaker can devote a long, prolific career to exploring the ins and outs of romantic indecisiveness, but that's what Eric Rohmer, who made his first feature thirty-five years ago, has done. With the exception of a couple of literary adaptations in the mid-seventies, Rohmer's movies have concentrated exclusively, even obsessively, on the love troubles of ordinary, middle-class men and women. The ages, occupations, and education levels of his characters vary, but not much else does. The movies in his major "cycles"—"Six Moral Tales," "Comedies and Proverbs," and the current, half-completed "Tales of the Four Seasons"—all take place in France, in the present day, and the main characters all seem to take forever to act on even the tiniest impulse: they talk, they brood, they talk some more, they run away from the objects of their desires, and then, if we're lucky, something actually happens. These agonizingly delayed climaxes can be as grand as the miraculous vision that suddenly appears to the depressed heroine of "Summer" (1986) or as trivial as the moment in "Claire's Knee" (1970) when the middle-aged hero at last works up the nerve to cop a quick, chaste feel of the heroine's perfect knee.

In recent years, Rohmer's stories have focussed almost entirely on women. His male protagonists have always seemed slightly pathetic: weak, hesitant intellectuals who spend most of their time rationalizing their timidity and the puniness of their passions. They aim low: to touch a knee and slink away undetected or, more frequently, to settle into a cozy, undemanding bourgeois marriage. The irresolution of Rohmer's women has greater urgency; it springs from deeper sources. Félicie (Charlotte Véry), the heroine of his latest picture, "A Tale of Winter," is typical. She's so stubbornly idealistic that she can't accept the imperfect pleasures available to her. She shuttles back and forth between two lovers, Maxence (Michel Voletti) and Loïc (Hervé Furic), but keeps both of them at arm's length. By ordinary standards, her behavior is shockingly capricious; she's jerking around two men who obviously adore her. But this isn't an ordinary triangle drama, because there's a phantom fourth point, which only Félicie can see. Five years earlier, she fell in love, on holiday, with a handsome cook named Charles (Frédéric Van Den Driessche); on her return to Paris, she gave him her address, but with a crucial, inexplicably stupid mistake, which made it impossible for him to find her. She has given birth to his daughter, and can't forget him, even though she knows that the prudent course of action would be to kiss off the hope of ever seeing him again and to get on with her life. But when she's faced with her realistic options she can't choose at all, because neither Maxence nor Loïc stirs her the way the memory of Charles does. She can't have what she wants and, try as she may, she can't bring herself to want what she has.

Félicie's renunciation of her in-the-flesh lovers in favor of the spectral image of Charles strikes Maxence and Loïc as crazy and unfair, and the audience as crazy and ominous: if she insists on clinging to the faint possibility of a reunion with her long-lost love, then this story is probably going nowhere, slow.

The first film in this series, "A Tale of Springtime" (1992), was a picture that might have been made expressly to frustrate the viewer's desire for resolution. In "Springtime," a pleasant, pretty, and rather reserved philosophy teacher is befriended by an unhappy adolescent girl, who keeps trying to hook her new friend up with her divorced father. This little romantic intrigue holds our interest as it unfolds, and Rohmer even allows us to think that we're ahead of the story. As it turns out, we're not on the same track; our expectations are moving in a straight line while the narrative is describing a circle, heading back to zero. Despite the peculiar awkwardness of the teacher's encounters with the girl's father, we can't quite believe that nothing is going to happen—this is supposed to be a *movie*. But nothing does happen. (If the seasonal setting has any resonance, it's purely ironic: the movie is about unrealized possibilities, buds that refuse to flower.) Experiences like this can make audiences mighty wary.

In "A Tale of Winter" Rohmer again tantalizes us with narrative misdirection, but his trickery in this picture produces a much more satisfying result: here he presents a romantic situation that appears utterly static, and then, unexpectedly, resolves it. Félicie (a difficult character, played with great delicacy by Véry) is, like the heroine of "Summer," an irritating woman, of the sort that Rohmer tends to treat very tenderly. The people he likes best are both obdurate and passive, digging in their heels and waiting for something or someone to descend on them, like grace, and confer joy and meaning on their lives. They're unusually watchful, because, although they don't always know what they're looking for, they're convinced that they'll know it when they see it. Where love is concerned, they're holdouts, refusing to take the field until their demands are met. Rohmer clearly views their fanaticism and their impossible patience as marks of spiritual integrity, and it's his pleasure to reward them.

Over the years, Rohmer's work has gradually lost the "It's so French" cachet that made his movies popular with American art-house audiences in the early seventies. A little so-Frenchness goes a long way, and if that's all you're interested in, any one Rohmer picture supplies enough to last a lifetime—no

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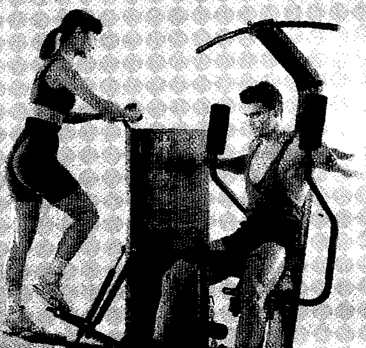

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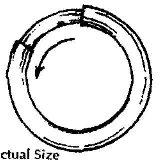

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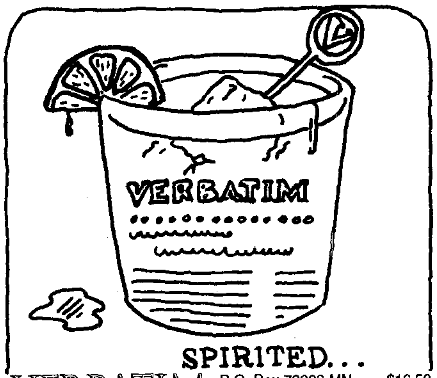

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need to get booster shots every couple of years. The consistency of his style and his subject matter can be infuriating even to his loyal fans. But his formal rigidity is deceptive: it's evidence not of a lack of imagination or daring but, paradoxically, of a deep respect for the variety of human behavior. Every mundane romantic dilemma he turns his attention to has its own unique characteristics, like a fingerprint. For him, nothing is more interesting than the odd, irrational ways people pursue their ideas of happiness, or more momentous than the process by which two people decide whether or not they can love each other. Rohmer's aesthetic philosophy is to stake out, and hold, a position from which he can ambush the rare life-altering event, the moment of grace, the miracle. He captures one of those at the end of "A Tale of Winter," and you smile at its aptness and its beauty. When he brings off a scene like that, he vindicates the faith that he has clung to so tenaciously all these years. In Eric Rohmer's movies—and no one else's—the more things stay the same, the more they change.

In "Bitter Moon," Roman Polanski seems to be trying to recapture the nasty, transgressive wit of his early films. Although this picture is clearly meant as a provocation, it's surprisingly inoffensive. Polanski's childish eagerness to shock is actually sort of charming; he throws a weird, sick party, but he's a terribly attentive host. He tells the story of two couples who meet on a cruise ship. Nigel (Hugh Grant) and Fiona (Kristin Scott Thomas) are a proper pair of Brits, married seven years and obviously a bit bored with each other. Nigel's idly roving eye lights on a voluptuous Frenchwoman, Mimi (Emmanuelle Seigner), whose husband, Oscar (Peter Coyote), is confined to a wheelchair. Oscar lures the young man to his stateroom and regales him with a lurid tale of sexual folly. In flashback, we see Oscar—an unsuccessful American writer who worships Hemingway and Miller and lives in Paris—and the much younger Mimi fall in love, and then, helplessly, into a destructive relationship in which their mutual passion can be expressed only as cruelty. Between scenes of Oscar and Mimi torturing each other, the movie cuts back to the ship, where Nigel interrupts Oscar's narration with Bertie Woosterish stammerings of outraged propriety; Oscar taunts Nigel with his obvious desire for Mimi; Mimi flirts with Nigel and insults Oscar; Nigel lies to Fiona; Fiona gets drunk and considers infidelity. The whole sordid mess reaches its climax during a shipboard New Year's Eve party. A violent storm disrupts the revelry, major characters perish, and an elderly man throws up in his conical party hat.

The wild climax is the best thing in "Bitter Moon": it allows Polanski to indulge his comic disgust at the spectacle of people having fun, and to turn a big, elaborate set into colorful debris. It's not that the two hours leading up to this gleeful orgy of destruction haven't been riveting. Until then, what has held the audience is the picture's volatile tone: you have no idea, from one moment to the next, how to respond to the outré behavior you're watching or the florid, tough-guy language of Oscar's narration. The screenplay (by Polanski, Gerard Brach, and John Brownjohn) is based on a novel by Pascal Bruckner, but the director's real sources of inspiration may have been the little-seen Hitchcock film "Rich and Strange" (1932), in which the marital problems of an upright British couple reveal themselves during a long ocean voyage, and "Last Tango in Paris," in which an expatriate American comes to grief through an intense affair with a young Frenchwoman. And at times Polanski also appears to be aiming for the deadpan erotic humor of late Buñuel pictures, like "Belle de Jour" and "Tristana"—fables that hinted at knowledge of unspeakable perversions. But Polanski can't quite muster the icy absurdist rigor that made his early pictures so distinctive, and the flashback sequences often play like an "SCTV" parody of "Last Tango." (Coyote's frantic performance sometimes recalls Joe Flaherty's running character Guy Caballero, the bug-eyed, wheelchair-bound owner of SCTV.) The cruel gamesmanship of the couples in "Bitter Moon" isn't as disturbing—or as funny—as it should be, because the staging keeps turning garish and theatrical, as if Polanski couldn't stop reminding us how naughty he is. His style betrays a kind of creative panic: it's Buñuel with an elbow in your ribs. ♦

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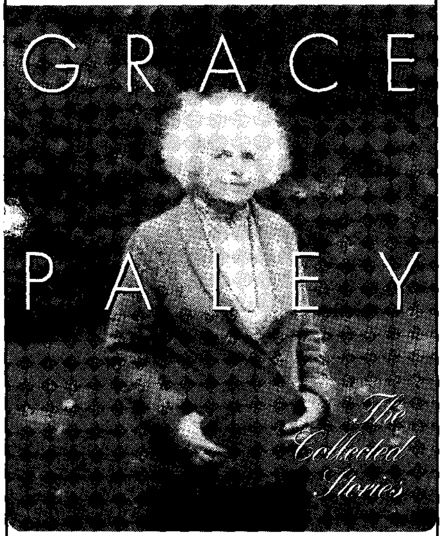

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BOOKS BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

Second Nature
by Alice Hoffman
(Putnam; $22.95)

HOFFMAN'S suspenseful tenth novel is a dark, romantic meditation on what it means to be human—a winter's tale of deadly hunters, doomed lovers, children found and lost. Stephen, the sole survivor of a plane crash in northern Michigan when he was three, has been raised in the wilderness by a pack of wolves. No one knows he exists until some hunters find him bleeding in a trap more than twenty years later and do him the dubious kindness of returning him to civilization. Robin has lived most of her life in a bucolic island community on Long Island Sound, where deer drift out of the woods to graze on the potted geraniums and the school library always has plenty of volunteers. When she goes to New York to visit her brother at the psychiatric hospital where he works, she isn't thinking about the famous Wolf Man who's incarcerated there. She's thinking about lasagna and a new mildew-resistant aster that might be useful in her horticultural business. But when she sees Stephen handcuffed and shivering in the hall, and he whispers the first words he's uttered since his parents died, she decides to take him home with her. The premise may seem like a long shot, but any reader intoxicated by this writer's blend of the mythic and the quotidian becomes, like Robin, an easy mark. Hoffman's words catch at you just as they catch in Stephen's throat after so many years of silence, "each one a crooked bone, a fishhook, a burning star."

Dolly
by Anita Brookner
(Random House; $22)

THE central character—Dolly, of course—may be the one most worthy of interest that this prolific author has yet described. Dolly is selfish and pathetic, a climber concerned chiefly with keeping up appearances and with her own comfort. Her efforts have nabbed her the doted-upon son of a well-off woman, but when the wealth is left to Dolly's sister-in-law—well, Dolly (by this time a widow) is willing to take checks from her, if she must. Late middle age finds her involved with a cad of her own exploitative stripe; at the last, Dolly wishes for little more than respectability. What is best here is the almost anthropological detailing of custom and habit in the family Dolly marries into—part Jewish, part German, part English. Brookner's mode of nearly uninterrupted exposition and analysis violates that most basic of precepts for writing fiction—show, don't tell—but somehow the emollient prose carries you smoothly along.

Dogs of God
by Pinckney Benedict
(Doubleday; $21)

THIS young short-story writer from West Virginia has turned his hand to the novel, and he has taken a maximalist approach that applies Southern grotesquerie to a misadventure out of a Robert Stone yarn. Marijuana growers with machine guns have displaced the moonshiners in an isolated Appalachian valley; the local law is in cahoots with a megalomaniacal kingpin; the new D.E.A. agent spends his days aimlessly skimming the treetops in his helicopter; feral dogs and homicidal pigs roam the countryside; and a pair of "transnational" gangsters are bringing in a planeload of weapons to trade for the pot harvest. Several holy fools have also stumbled into this evil backwater, including a bare-handed boxer who falls in love with a grower's beautiful wife, and a nameless hermit who falls in love with a cemetery statue. There is a hallucinatory precision to Benedict's prose, which makes the outlandish horror bearable, and a momentum that conveys what one character discerns in his final moments—"a whole and complete notion of the inevitable." ♦

SHOUTS AND MURMURS

SCOOP!

BY CALVIN TRILLIN

In February, I went to Ecuador for a couple of weeks, thinking, I suppose, that I wouldn't hear much about Tonya Harding down there. That was not what I intended to say to the immigration officer at the Quito airport if he asked me the purpose of my visit. "*Turismo*" was the answer I had prepared. That would have been a truthful answer: the prospect of not having to listen to discussions of competition's dark side was something I thought of as more in the nature of a fringe benefit.

It is true, though, that when vacationers speak of getting away the responsibility of being informed citizens is often part of what they are trying to get away from. It may even be that a researcher with exquisitely nuanced surveying methods could demonstrate that there is some correlation between the number of Americans buying airplane tickets to foreign lands and, say, newspaper coverage of the romantic complications in the life of Joey Buttafuoco.

Still, Americans often find that even a few days in a foreign country can make them itchy for news of home. In Europe, you can often spot an American who obviously isn't concentrating properly on a museum or a mountain view that he's come thousands of miles to see: his eyes are constantly drawn to a fresh issue of *Newsweek* that he just came across after a week or two of trying to puzzle out the sparse Italian coverage of some juicy Washington scandal. At times, I might as well admit, that American has been me.

I am, in other words, one of those travellers who seek emancipation from news while not quite stemming the craving for news. In Ecuador, though, the craving eventually gained the upper hand. After my wife and I had spent a couple of weeks in the countryside, we returned to Quito feeling like some lost souls who had emerged from years in the jungle, blinking our eyes in the sunlight and asking if Roger Maris had managed to break Babe Ruth's home-run record after all.

On a Tuesday in late February—our last day in Ecuador—we therefore presented ourselves at the largest newsstand in Quito, where we snatched up Monday's *International Herald Tribune*. As we were about to leave, my wife pointed out an even fresher catch—Tuesday's International Edition of the Miami *Herald*. We dashed back to our hotel room like two lucky squirrels who couldn't wait to divide up the nuts.

While my wife read the *Trib*, I went through the Miami *Herald*, perusing stories about American-style political campaigning in Russia and the wanderings of Dr. Kevorkian and the European Community's view of peace in the former Yugoslavia and a Joycelyn Elders press conference on the value of health education and a warning from Yitzhak Shamir on the dangers of trusting the Arabs.

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INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE

The second section was business news, which I normally do not read. I am aware that it would be to my advantage—and perhaps to the advantage of my family—to pay some attention to business news, just as I am aware that I might profit from a serious effort to restrict my eating mainly to celery and certain root vegetables. In both cases, though, I just can't quite bring myself to do it. As I started to toss the business section toward the floor, my eye was caught by an item that began, "Consumers who spent erratically for much of this year regained their zest for shopping during the Thanksgiving weekend."

Thanksgiving weekend? I looked up at the date at the top of the page: Tuesday, November 30, 1993. I was about to tell my wife that an antique business section had been slipped into that day's Miami *Herald* by mistake, but then I glanced at the date on the first section: November 30, 1993. The news I had just caught up on after an absence of two weeks was news from ten weeks before my departure.

Not only that. If the Thanksgiving-weekend story hadn't caught my eye, I would have put aside the *Herald* feeling grateful for having been brought up to date. Nothing had seemed amiss—or, more to the point, what seemed amiss was what usually seems amiss. I suppose the experience can be taken as an argument for putting news-craving into perspective—an argument against shoving aside an ancient schoolteacher from Ohio in order to grab the last *Time* on an Ankara newsstand. Or it might simply be an argument for more careful reading: I should have noticed that the Miami *Herald* made no mention of Tonya Harding. ♦

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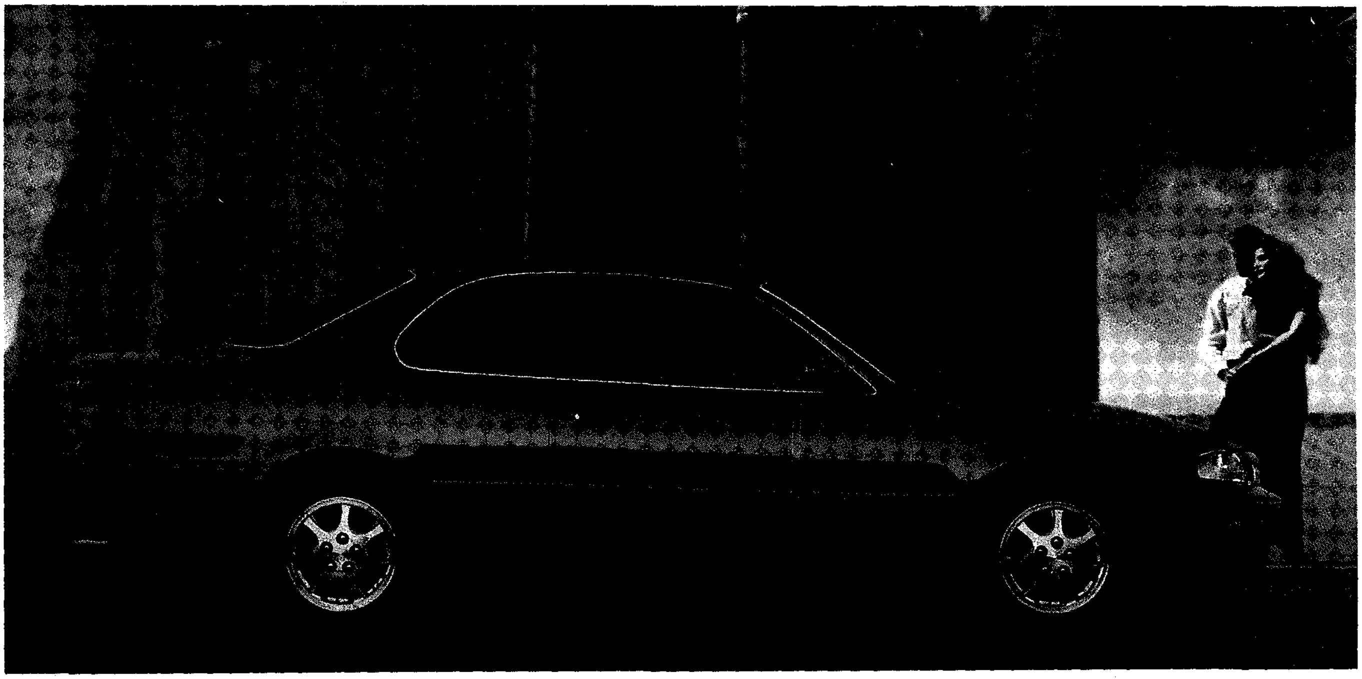

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